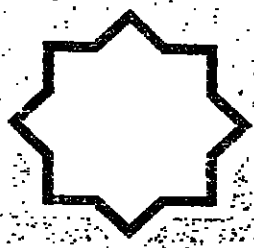


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Clinton administration subtly shifts US policy toward Iraq

By R. Jeffrey Smith
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

WASHINGTON—With the success of a Kurdish and Iraqi military drive across northern Iraq in recent days, and the resulting loss of an important base of operations for US military and intelligence activities inside the country, the Clinton administration has subtly shifted US policy toward Iraq.

Seeking to make the best of a situation that has worsened every day this month, officials have publicly redefined Washington's strategic interest in the country as consisting solely of containing the military operations of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in southern Iraq—near the Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian oil fields—rather than in the northern Iraq region bordering Turkey, Iran and Syria.

The stated new US policy priority sets aside the 5-year-old goal of deterring Iraqi adventurism in northern Iraq, guaranteeing the smooth delivery of humanitarian aid there, and keeping the Kurdish-inhabited region free of undue domination by any of the neighboring countries.

An additional goal was to broker a peace among warring

Kurdish factions that Washington hoped would foment anti-Saddam activities. With the departure in the past two weeks from northern Iraq of virtually all Americans involved in those efforts, Washington has lost its capability to pursue these goals and is not likely to regain it soon.

This judgment reflects a growing consensus of US government analysts and independent experts who have watched with astonishment as one of the Kurdish factions, the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP), sought and received Iraqi military assistance to assert military control over an area of hundreds of square miles in which Washington and its allies formerly exercised primary influence.

Among the more-tangible effects of the Iraqi-KDP military drive on Washington's long-standing policy of overt and covert US intervention in northern Iraq are the following:

■ The humanitarian relief program known as Operation Provide Comfort, which Washington organized in 1991 to support the Kurds and provide an enduring US foothold inside Iraq, is in shambles. All of its personnel have left the country,

and many of the Kurds Washington hoped would foment anti-Saddam activities. With the departure in the past two weeks from northern Iraq of virtually all Americans involved in those efforts, Washington has lost its capability to pursue these goals and is not likely to regain it soon.

■ A major CIA-funded effort to harass, contain, and destabilize Saddam Hussein, which sympathetic Kurds orchestrated from the headquarters of their Iraqi National Congress in the northern city of Irbil, has been wiped out by the KDP takeover of the city. Iraqi security agents have destroyed equipment owned by the Congress, seized its encrypted computer files, and executed, captured, or surrounded many of its members and sympathizers.

■ By successfully implementing a military alliance with the KDP, Saddam has undoubtedly been able to improve his standing in the single sector of Iraqi society—the corps of Iraqi military officers—which the CIA repeatedly has said provides the best hope of mounting a successful coup against him. That will complicate continuing US efforts to recruit potential architects of such a coup through dissident groups such as the Iraqi National Accord—a CIA-backed anti-Saddam

movement based in Jordan.

■ Turkey has threatened to create a new security zone inside northern Iraq, in response to the new military developments. That would give Ankara new leverage with Baghdad and ultimately could prompt the two countries to strike a new strategic alliance aimed at ensuring an end to Kurdish attacks inside Turkey from Iraqi territory.

Some government analysts say such an alliance could pull the new Islamic government in Ankara further away from the

Western orbit. That means "our ability to influence events from that base of operations is potentially gone," an administration official said.

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns told reporters Tuesday that Washington is unsure how events will unfold once the KDP military drive is completed, including whether the Kurdish party's alliance with Saddam will persist and what its immediate consequences will be for members of the rival Kurdish faction, the Patriotic Union of

Kurdistan, and other inhabitants of the region.

When pressed to explain why the administration has not done more to obstruct the Iraqi-Kurdish drive, Burns gave the clearest and most concise description yet of Washington's current policy: "The United States has very clear interests in Iraq, and those interests are to deter Saddam Hussein from future aggression against his neighbors, specifically Saudi Arabia

Continued on page 2

Control of oil pipeline behind Baghdad's northern incursion

By Ahmad Shaker
Special to The Star

AMMAN—What the United States and its allies failed to admit or even point to in the recent developments in northern Iraq is that Baghdad's move was motivated by strategic national interest: to safeguard its oil pipelines and fields from the encroaching Iraqis and their Kurdish supporters.

According to press information, the Iranian-backed Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, headed by Jalal Talabani, was receiving truck loads of armaments and ammuni-

tion from Iraq. In recent weeks, the Iraq's north eastern borders were penetrated by members of the Revolutionary Guards and heading towards Irbil. Diplomatic and UN reports suggested that Tehran's aims were to back Talabani's forces in their fight against Saddam Hussein's Kurdish Democratic Party in order to control the Iraqi oil installations in the north in addition to the main crossing border points into Turkey and Iran.

Talabani's forces had already defeated

Continued on page 2

Depuis 45 ans, l'UNRWA apporte son aide aux réfugiés palestiniens voir page 12

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YOUR WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Opposition deputies remain adamant about removal of government

AMMAN (Star)—We are alive, well and kicking, the 23-opposition deputies of the Lower House were trying to tell reporters at a press conference held in Parliament on Wednesday.

Reaffirming the "popular demand" for the government's resignation, the deputies reiterated that the government was unfit to govern or to carry out its program charging that its policies were behind recent public disturbances in the south of the country.

The bulk of the government's opposition in the Lower House now consists of 15 Islamic Action Front members, six independents, Khalil Haddadin of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party, Toujan Faisal, the only woman deputy.

The deputies said they were holding their meeting at the Gallery Hall forming in effect a mini-Lower House "to continue convening the House session in a protest against dissolution of the extraordinary session after the Karak riots three weeks ago."

The opposition met follow-

ing a series of meetings that Prime Minister Abdel Karim Al Kabarti held with deputies recently in an attempt to cool tempers after the riots that broke out in Karak and other southern towns last month following government measures on bread and fodder subsidies. IAF deputy Hameed Mansour, spokesperson for the opposition bloc, delivered a fiery statement reiterating that "the government decision to increase bread and fodder prices was a mistake." He added that "the decision affected the lives of all people particularly the poor." Mansour explained that "the prices of more than 400 consumer items had also increased directly after the increase in bread and fodder prices."

The opposition deputies opened fire on critics who accused them of providing the government with the chance to give legitimacy to its subsidy policy by being absent from the House debate on the issue.

"This is an inaccurate con-

Continued on page 2



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu leaving the White House Monday after meeting with President Bill Clinton. The issue of resuming Syrian-Israeli talks and the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks were discussed by the two leaders. They also discussed the US Cruise missile raids on Iraq. UPI

Government ponders measures to offset price hikes

By Hamdan Al Hajj
Special to The Star

IN THE light of the latest developments in the Kingdom, governments and officials in different parts in the country submitted to the government reports on the living situations of people.

The government studied the reports and concluded that bold initiatives should be adopted to lift the heavy load on the shoulders of the people.

The Minister of Supply, Mr. Munir Sobar, told The Star that "the government intends to reduce the prices of bread and fodder" when "wheat prices and barley are reduced in the exporting countries." But these depend on world prices.

Mr Sobar explained that Jor-

dan and Syria agreed on a formula. "They want cement in return for supplying us with barley."

The minister elaborated, "He said that Syria is ready to 'supply Jordan with barley in exchange of any commodity available in Jordan and much needed by the Syrian market'."

On the local economic scene, Mr Sobar explained that "liberalization of prices won't be limited to bread and fodder but it will include fruit and vegetables." He added that "the lifting of subsidy on rice, sugar and powder milk is a matter of time."

Within a period of six to seven months, Mr Sobar said, all prices will be completely freed as the coupons system

will be cancelled. The government, "after finalizing the lifting of subsidy on all commodities will compensate the needy for the hike in prices," Mr Sobar said. "This amount will be about 25 dinars given annually for each citizen." This includes the current JD 1.28 bread compensation.

Accordingly, such measures will enable Jordan to enter the international free market and reduce the impact of the economic recession.

Jordan will be qualified to be a party to international economic agreements such as the partnership with Europe, which allows free movement of Jor-

Continued on page 2

Mother Teresa's health raises issue of her successor

By John-Thor Dahlburg
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

CALCUTTA, India—Tarak Das, 65, his legs paralyzed and his lungs badly eaten by tuberculosis, lies on an air mattress in the Immaculate Heart Home for the Dying Destitute.

He was kicked out of his home by his own family and had nowhere else to go but the Calcutta hospice run by Mother Teresa and her nuns.

"Who else is there for us but Mother?" the ailing man asks, feebly raising a thin arm to lend drama to his question.

For Mother Teresa's Mission-

aries of Charity and the Roman Catholic Church, events in recent weeks have lent great urgency to the sickly Bengali's question. Mother Teresa, the world's most celebrated missionary and perhaps its most admired and respected woman, had to be rushed 20 August to a Calcutta nursing home for her own health problems—malaria and pneumonia.

While in intensive care, the frail, birdlike nun suffered heart failure. She also turned 86, breathing through a tube hooked to a respirator.

Now breathing on her own and reportedly feeling fit again, she was released Friday.

Mother Teresa was fitted with a pacemaker in 1989, when she suffered a heart attack, and doctors have said

that despite her current improvement her heartbeat remains irregular.

Though she may have rallied this time, a decade-long list of health problems and Mother Teresa's mounting age combine to give immediacy to the matter of who her successor will be, and how the Missionaries of Charity will fare without its creator.

The successor to the group's founder, leader and abiding inspiration—who was honored with the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to help the poor, sick and dying—will have enormous shoes to fill.

The next superior general will supplant the most famous figure in Christendom after Pope John Paul II himself, and perhaps its most beloved.

Founded singlehandedly in 1950 by Mother Teresa when

she had just five rupees—about 15 cents—in her pocket, the Missionaries of Charity has mushroomed to encompass 4,000 nuns working in 570 missions in 120 countries. The order operates homes and hospices for AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis patients, soup kitchens, children's programs and family counseling and schooling for the destitute in locales from Tanzania to San Francisco.

In Calcutta, the order's cradle and home base, the nuns, clad in their distinctive white cowls with blue stripes, dish out US farm-surplus wheat and oil to the hungry and perform other tasks.

So what will happen when this ubiquitous and trusted figure, who can raise tens of millions of dollars annually in contributions throughout the world, is gone? Prognoses differ.

Continued on page 2



Mother TERESA of Calcutta. Associated Press

World Report

هكذا من الأصل

JORDAN

WEEK

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Prince meets Israeli minister



HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday received the visiting Israeli Tourism Minister Moshe Katsaf who conveyed the Prince a message from Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The message dealt with Israeli procedures aiming at facilitating trade exchange between Jordan and Israel including transport measures. Discussions during the meeting focused on the touristic activities between the two countries since the signing of the peace treaty in 1994.

Mr Katsaf briefed his Royal Highness on the draft projects that would be presented to the Middle East and North Africa summit that would be held in Cairo later this year.

The Regent asserted the importance of choosing feasible projects that would realize the aspiration of the people of the region to live in peace and security on a firm base of achievements.

resulted in the decrease of the number of tourists who were expected to visit the region.

Tarawneh appointed press advisor

Abdel Salam Tarawneh was appointed as a press advisor to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent. Mr. Al Tarawneh has long been in Journalism. At one point, he was the chief editor of *Ad Dustour* and the now defunct *Sawt Al Shaab*. He worked as an advisor in the Ministry of Information before taking up his new post.



Tarawneh

Trade set to increase

Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) discussed the mechanism to activate the trade agreement signed between the two sides, according to Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abu Al Raghib. During his meeting, Tuesday, with the Palestinian Minister of Trade Mr. Maher Masri, Abu Al Raghib said talks touched on ways to broaden the list of possible imports by the Palestinian side from Jordan after overcoming obstacles facing this agreement which have been put by the Israeli side. "The trade agreement signed by the PNA and Israel is in favor of Israel," he added. Abu Al Raghib said the technical committees which include representatives from Jordan, the PNA and Israel have discussed these obstacles in their meetings. "A meeting on the ministerial level between the three sides will be held to put an end to these obstacles by amending the PNA-Israeli agreement," he added. Mr. Masri said "we discussed economic and trade ties between Jordan and PNA specially the exchange of goods."

be aware of shooting because it harms lives." However, it appears that nobody really takes any notice.

Tourists on the rise

The number of tourists who have visited Jordan in the first eight months of this year reached 786,54 compared to 738,670 tourists in the same period from last year, sources at the Ministry of Tourism said. They added that 79,071 tourists have come from the United States, 178,494 from European countries, 30,132 from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong, India and Africa, 41,225 from Gulf states and 786,054 from Israel. It also said that the recent developments in the region

Latest price

Continued from page 1

ulian products to the European markets and vice-versa. Jordan also will improve its chances of joining the World Trade Organization: such membership requires complete liberalization of the market and a high reduction in customs fees.

This is a policy aimed at achieving a simpler tariff system by the end of the century.

Observers said there is a pressing need to reform the deteriorating economic problems, something that was left pending for far too long. The previous policies of governments, experts believe, lacked bold steps to prepare the country for the coming economic challenges.

CIA-backed Iraqi dissidents

Continued from page 1

assault on Irbil, giving the Kurds ample time to flee. When the CIA team fled to Turkey from Iraq shortly before the 31 August assault by Iraqi and KDP forces, it brought with it the chief of a small group of armed mercenaries that had protected the

CIA team; it also brought the man's family, to protect them all from Iraqi retribution. Other mercenaries in the protective force—who were not allied with either of the two principal Kurdish factions—were given money, "allowed to keep their weapons, and told to return to their villages," the

official said. "We handled it as best we could" under pressure from the advancing KDP military force, he added. The official went on to reject criticism of the CIA's stance by several Republican lawmakers, saying that the Clinton administration had issued a series of private warnings to the head of the KDP, Massoud Barzani, that "the must take care of these people" in the National Congress.

The official acknowledged that Washington's leverage over Barzani is not great at present, because Barzani is now allied with Saddam, but noted that "the glare of public opinion is on him" and "he knows he may want to broker a deal with the United States at some point" if the alliance with Saddam breaks up. Officials of the National

Accord were not available for comment last Monday. But a written statement by the group confirmed that this summer the Iraqi government had arrested and executed Iraqi dissidents who "are part of the military and civilian organizations ... that are allied with and coordinating with" the accord. The dissident group's statement claimed that "in addition to civilian elements, brothers in the Army's Air Force were arrested as well as elements from special security (forces), and other heroes from the armed forces."

A senior administration official said that Washington had been able to confirm that the Iraqi government had conducted "widespread executions" this summer of alleged participants in a conspiracy to topple Saddam, that was orchestrated by the National Accord. He also said that the group had evidently been

betrayed from within. Another official attributed the setback to "a failure to maintain operational security." Saddam was able to penetrate the group in part by monitoring the activities of a courier who carried information back and forth between its sympathizers inside Iraq and its headquarters in Amman, according to several well-informed dissident sources.

The arrests were carried out beginning on 26 June, three days after *The Washington Post* published an article, based in part on interviews in Jordan with leaders of the National Accord, stating that it had received funds from the CIA and was working "effectively" to implement a CIA-backed plot to topple Saddam. The group had been penetrated by Iraqi security prior to the article's publication, according to dissident sources.

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Bread consumption falls

After the doubling of its price, bread consumption fell by 35 percent according to the Prime Minister Mr. Abdel Karim Al Kabarti. In the Irbid Governorate, consumption fell by 47 percent. Mr. Kabarti is pleased saying that the "waste" element of bread is long disappearing.

On another level, the Ministry of Supply has started an extensive campaign of "patrolling" the market. The object is to catch any culprits who over-price staple commodities. The ministry has formed 20 committees whose sole objective is to monitor prices. Ministry officials say that anyone caught of overcharging will be heavily dealt with. This new vigilance was brought about by the fact that it was reported that some merchants were selling wheat that has long expired. What will happen to them is anybody's guess.



Al Kabarti

ing to economic columnist Fahd Al Fanek. He says that this means that five percent of Jordanian families have servants. Leaving children with the servants is a serious "offence" on the "present and future of children," he points out. But that's not all. Servants cause the economy a lot of

pain. Each maid costs JD 2052 to be maintained. Although her salary is only \$100 a month, she incurs a lot of other expenses such as her upkeep, travel expenses and fees for her residence permit. He maintains that the 30,000 maids cost the national economy an annual JD 62 million per year.

New German ambassador in Jordan

The German Embassy in Amman has a new ambassador. Arriving on 14 September, Mr. Peter Mende is not a newcomer to Jordan. He was a member of the German Embassy in Amman between 1969-71. The 62-year-old ambassador takes over from Mr. Heinrich Reiners who left the country earlier this month.

University admissions under the stick

Trouble is brewing this week at the public universities. Tawjihi students are very dis-

satisfied with the way that their admission procedures have been handled. A memo was sent by the opposition deputies to the Prime Minister, Abdel Karim Al Kabarti, urging him to act quickly. The memo was sent on behalf of parents who are angry with the way that admissions to the universities have been conducted. They demand that every student whose averages were more than 76 percent be admitted to university. The memo calls on the government to reverse its decision and allow students to take up the 500 scholarships that were offered by Iraqi universities.

Himani in custody

The General Secretary of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, Mr. Tayseer Al Himani, is being held in custody. Mr. Himani was questioned by the public prosecutor about the last events that took place in the south. After questioning, he was taken to prison in Irbid. Mr. Himani is also a member of the higher coordinating committee for opposition parties.

Control of oil pipeline

Continued from page 1

Barzani's Kurds in Seydi area. That prompted Iran to talk openly about its role in northern Iraq. It's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati boasted that "only Iran can implement peace in northern Iraq."

Tehran was relying on two important facts: one, that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was too weak to intervene militarily, and second, that even if he wanted to intervene he would risk a strong US reprisal.

Iran's objectives were clear in northern Iraq. It wanted to have its own ally, Talabani, in control of the oil-rich area before the oil-for-food deal under UN resolution 986 was to commence. In that way Iran's influence in that region would have allowed it to dictate its terms on Baghdad, which is claiming huge reparations from Iraq.

Analysts believe Baghdad was able to read the Iranian moves clearly and realized that it had to move or it would lose control of its pipeline installations in Kirkuk. The Iraqi dilemma was resolved when Barzani sent an urgent letter to President Saddam asking for his intervention. And he did.

The question here is what was Washington doing to confront the Iranian threat. For one thing it was trying, hopelessly, to bring the two Kurdish factions to the negotiating table. Once that failed, it was confronted with the new reality in the north which was imposed by Saddam.

The US reprisal has doubled Saddam's gains almost overnight. He not only regained direct control of the north, kicking out the Iranians and overrunning Talabani's forces. But the missile attack, aimed primarily at helping President Clinton in his bid for re-election in November, has fractured the US-led anti-Saddam alliance. It now appears that Saddam's northern incursion has preempted CIA plans to stage a coup or assassinate the Iraqi leader. Effectively, Saddam got much more than what he aimed for. He not only derailed Iranian designs to control northern Iraq, but chased away the CIA and their Iraqi informers.

The US has now abandoned its policy to use the Kurds and northern Iraq in its crusade to topple Saddam Hussein. Now it is concentrating its "containment" efforts in the Shia-populated south, where it has unilaterally expanded the no-fly zone and directed all of its missile attacks.

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Opposition deputies

Continued from page 1

clusion." Mr. Mansour said. "The government adopted its measures and published them in official and semi-official newspapers before bringing them to the House." He said that in the bread and fodder issues, the government had behaved with the deputies in "a superior and condescending manner."

In their statement, the opposition legislators said that as a result of the price hike, the "circle of poverty was widening" and they warned of a "national catastrophe."

They argued that the government is "mistaken if it thought that the case was over," people are receiving "daily shocks with the continuous increase in prices and people become unable to comply with the needs of life.... hungry people will not remain silent."

The deputies protested against what they claimed was the government's series of aggressions on the constitutional freedoms of the people. Mansour expressed the deputies' "concern over their prevention by the authority from visiting prisons."

claims about democracy; we demand the immediate release of all prisoners who were arrested after the bread crisis."

The issue of the latest US aggression against Iraq imposed itself on the press conference. The deputies accused the government of compromising the "brotherly relations between Jordan and Iraq." Mansour focused on the government's response to the latest developments on the Iraqi front.

Deputy Abdallah Al Akaleh of the IAF, defended the right of 23-opposition deputies to play politics in this stage of time. Responding to an accusation that the opposition was exploiting the bread crisis to make political gains, Akaleh said "our political investment in this issue is not a shameful matter, especially when we talk about a central issue that affects every Jordanian."

Deputy Toujan Faisal asked the government to leave or "let the people in the streets force it to leave." She added that "we insist on our right to see the detainees, and if the government continues to reject our demand then this raises fear that these prisoners are in a serious condition."

The deputies warned that if the Lower House fails in October's session to vote the government out of office, more deputies will resign their posts.

Clinton administration

Continued from page 1

and Kuwait."

In words that appeared to emanate from the enormous frustration many policy-makers feel at the new turn of events in Iraq, Burns angrily said the Kurds had sown their own fate.

"We gave the Kurds every opportunity for five years," Burns explained. "We gave them political protection, we gave them economic and humanitarian assistance, we gave them a security zone in the north where they could run their own affairs in a highly autonomous way. And the Kurds failed to meet that great historic opportunity for the Kurdish people. It's their responsibility for what's happened in the north."

Describing Saddam as an "irresponsible autocrat" who had made a "laughable and almost-comic offer" to pardon all members of the opposition in northern Iraq, Burns went on to issue a public plea that Kurdish leaders resist Saddam's "blandishments" and orchestrate a return to the status quo in which Washington exercised its considerable influence.

But the proverbial handwriting is already on the wall, many US officials say. Turkish Ambassador to the United States Nuzhet Kandemir said Sunday that although Operation Provide Comfort is "still going

on (from inside Turkey) ... the terms of reference, the role of Operation Provide Comfort will have to be revised." He explained that the program no longer provided "the comfort that we have been looking for."

An unstated goal of the program was to help Iraqi defectors get across the border to Turkey after first extracting any useful information from them. But the evacuation of all US, British, French, and Turkish personnel associated with the program in northern Iraq, as well as personnel working for nearly all other relief agencies in the region has virtually ended the operation.

"The most valuable part of the operation was to show clearly to the Iraqi people that our fight was (with them and) against Saddam," said retired Army Col. Richard Naub, a former operation official. The new reality, he said, is "that we are less and less of a player in the region."

THE STAR
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Control oil pipeline
Continued from page 1
Barzani's Kurds in the area. That prompted Iraq to open up about 500 sq km of northern Iraq to the Velayati business. "Only Iraq can ensure peace in northern Iraq," he said. "If Iraq is not there, the Kurds will not be safe." He also said that Iraq is not interested in the oil pipeline. "We are not interested in the oil pipeline," he said. "We are interested in the peace in northern Iraq."

Environmental protection Necessary for development

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION is becoming a pressing need especially for countries heading towards economic development. The latest environmental theories call for an "ecological economy."

The Friedrich Nauman Foundation (FNF) is a German Non-governmental organization which has offices in most developing countries.

"It is concerned with expanding democracy in all fields," Mr. Walter Rudel, the representative of the Foundation in Jordan told *The Star*.

In Jordan however, the foundation is concerned with environmental protection. It is an affiliate of the German Liberal Party.

"Friedrich Nauman works in 80 countries with about 300 partner organizations," Mr. Rudel says.

Environmental protection is "not only to achieve economic sustainability but to help create stability in the social and political fields."

"When we came to Jordan in 1981 we coordinated with Jordan's cooperative organizations in the field of development education and within this approach we started to tackle environmental problems," Rudel said.

The foundation also works in agricultural production. Despite population growth, agricultural production including grain, is decreasing," he added.

In 1990 Friedrich Nauman initiated an environmental education program with Jordan's Environment Society.

"We like to promote NGOs because most of the foreign aid goes to government. When we started with the society they had 400 members, now they have more than 4000 members covering the country." Most of the work of the foundation is in rural areas.

He emphasized that there must be an environmental policy to tackle population growth. This is happening in Jordan, one of the countries with a high population growth rate, said Rudel.

All this requires environmental awareness and concerted action by the concerned authorities. "If people have a strong environmental movement in the country they can introduce environmental demands to political parties which should set a clear-cut environmental policies in their political platform," Rudel continued. "If you look at the political platform of the parties in Jordan you see that few are taking into consideration environmental ideas and policies," he added.

Industrialists must recognize that environmental issues are crucial for development. "Most pollution stems from industrialization. The West are moving from an industrial to an ecological economy." This is one of the ideas that is being developed. "If you have a well-organized functioning economy, this will help in the political field and ensure better security to the people," he continued. This is necessary for democracy. He gives the example of the "eastern tigers of Asia." Although these were not functioning democracies and some are not, nevertheless, there is "liberal thought, open mindedness and engagement."

But he maintained that there is a long way to go. He said that we are responsible for creating a clean environment for the future generation. "We can't deplete resources and leave nothing for the following generation because mankind will be at stake. We need a strict resource management and an economy which uses less resources and energy." He says we have to recycle more.

The issue of climatic change has become very important from the 1980's onwards creating much concern in production of CFCs do exist, more can be done.

"We need an international environmental code that prosecutes violators and fines them. The industrial sectors that violate the law must clear up the damages." The earth summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1993 issued the Agenda 21 for the 21st century. It produced clear-cut programs to fight environmental problems. "All countries must cooperate to get these problems under control. However, he added that very few countries lived up to those principles so far.

"When I came to Jordan 50 years ago, there were very few cars and now you have traffic jams everywhere." Cars must switch to unleaded petrol to protect people from sulphur dioxide which causes cancer especially for kids. Although the World Bank is calling for the use of unleaded gasoline in the year 2000, this idea appears distant.

Some developing countries like China and Indonesia do not use proper environmental measures. In the next 20 years, China will have 100 million more cars. "Anybody has the right to drive a car but it must be a clean car," he emphasized.

As to agricultural problems, Rudel explained that many countries did not take the right measures at the right time to improve agricultural production. "It is still possible to buy your supplies on the international market but one has to be aware that the green revolution and the increase in food production that followed it does not work anymore. The green revolution was based on huge amount of fertilizers and pesticides. In 1968, one ton of fertilizers produced a yield of 8 tons, and now if you want to add one more ton to the yield you must use another ton of fertilizers. This is too expensive especially in developing countries."

The more population you have, the more difficult it is to provide services. If you don't provide education and job opportunities this will lead to unrest in the country."

In regard to the productive soil, Rudel said that we are losing every year about 26 billion of top soil. He added that agriculture, as an industry, is no longer a lucrative enterprise in the countries which lack proper water, soil and climate.

"The hike in bread prices in Jordan was a must because bread was too cheap in the country...If there will be as we are told, a bad wheat harvest in the U.S. its price may rise higher," he said.

Rudel indicated that the international commodity market is changing from a supplier to a buyer's market. As a buyer you have to compete with others. "A country like China can not feed its people anymore and it has to import huge amounts of grain. It is estimated that China in 20 years has to buy every year 200 million tons of wheat and this is the amount which is available in the whole world for export."



Rudel



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, participates in the Regional Conference on Administration, Good Governance and the Development of the Private Sector that began, Sunday. The seminar is organized by the Ministry of Administrative Development and the World Bank and attended by participants from different Arab countries. Prince Hassan called for "coherent administrative procedures" aimed at investment promotion. This is a necessary element concerning Jordan's entry to the World Trade Organization and develop relations with the European Union.

Greek Ambassador to Jordan, Aristidis Sandis 'Greece...is willing to serve as a bridge between the European Union and the Middle Eastern countries...'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Aristidis Sandis, the newly appointed Greek ambassador to Jordan talks to *The Star's* Munther Hamdan Al Hajj about the relations between Jordan and Greece, the Euro-Med partnership and the peace process. Excerpts follow:

How do you see the bilateral relations between Greece and Jordan?

I am glad to say that our relations are traditionally excellent, and cooperation in all domains is at a very high level.

Furthermore, our two countries have a similar outlook to the problems of the region.

Can you tell me about the specific areas of cooperation?

I can tell you the following in an indicative way:

- There are relations in different domains of human activity. A large number of Jordanian students have made their university studies in Greece, many of them with scholarships from the Greek state. In addition, military personnel of the Jordanian armed forces are granted regularly scholarships for studies in the Military Academy of Greece. This cooperation in the military field is scheduled to be regulated through a relevant agreement. I would like here to point out that the cultural protocol between the two countries which will be renewed shortly provides opportunities for cooperation in the fields of education, tourism, archaeology, libraries and generally opens new avenues of contacts and cooperation among our peoples.

■ The agreement on Maritime Transport between the governments of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and of the Hellenic Republic, initiated in Athens recently and is to be signed during a forthcoming visit to Jordan of the Greek Minister of Mercantile Marine, opens new opportunities of cooperation in the field of maritime transport.

■ Close cooperation between the two countries exist in the field of health.

■ Businessmen from the two countries will have the facility through the coordination of the Chambers of Commerce and Trade in Jordan and Greece in order to intensify trade and economic relations.

■ Finally, I would like to point out that during the visit of the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs to Amman last Summer a protocol of cooperation between the foreign ministries of Greece and Jordan was signed.

They take their final vows, reportedly has been on the rise, and some Copts who have dealings with the nuns name her as the top challenger to Sister Lewis.

Under church procedure, the Missionaries of Charity select their own leader by assembling a conclave of nuns, known as a "general chapter," to represent all of the sisters scattered throughout the world. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, however, has the power to veto the general chapter's choice.

Until now, Mother Teresa has kept mum about her own preferences, if she has any, about who should follow her. "God sent Teresa. He will send somebody else to carry on the work," she once said.



Sandis

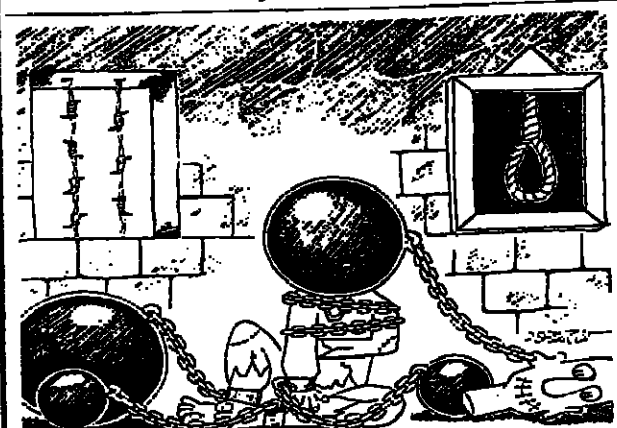
international law and go to the International Court of Justice if she has any claim. Greece will defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity with all means.

As far as the Cyprus issue is concerned, I believe that after 22 years of military occupation, Turkey is not interested in solving it. On the contrary, Ankara is working towards the final partition of the island so that the two communities have no contact with each other. Cyprus there is a legitimate government recognized by all countries in the world, including Jordan and this government is willing to sit down and try to solve all issues with Turkey, reaching a viable solution on the basis of international law and the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

tion in relation to her disputing the sovereignty of Greek islets in the Aegean established by international treaties, apply

Point of order

By Raed Al Abed



Jordanian prisoners abroad: Forgotten by all?

The issue of Jordanian prisoners in Arab and foreign jails has been put on the back burner by the government as it was by previous ones. Indeed, little if anything has been done to move this issue by the concerned authorities. The number of Jordanian prisoners abroad is estimated at 250. This does not include the number of Jordanians gone missing in Iraq, Syria, Kuwait and Israel.

The authorities in these countries refuse to provide information about the whereabouts of the missing persons, but their families and human rights organizations believe most are in prison. Their families worry that their missing sons and daughters could be in life threatening situation. Most have been arrested and thrown into prisons without charge. In Israel most Jordanian detainees are classified as prisoners of war.

According to local human rights organizations, these prisoners are living under miserable conditions, and are subjected to torture and humiliation.

The rest of our prisoners are held in Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Iran, the US, Germany, Romania, Philippines and Russia.

Charges against these include hijacking (Germany, Romania), bombing (USA), spying (Iran, Saudi Arabia) and militant Islamic activity (USA, Philippines). However, many of these prisoners are victims of miscarriages of justice—they have not received a fair trial. This led local human rights activists to accuse foreign countries of fabricating charges against them.

We believe that urgent action is needed. Jordanian prisoners abroad must not be forgotten. A national campaign is needed to reawaken the government.

A workshop organized by local human rights organizations and the ministries of foreign affairs, interior and justice was held last March. A permanent committee was formed to take up the cases with the concerned authorities in these countries. But no sooner the committee was formed it went into a deep stupor. "Unfortunately we did nothing," one committee member said.

However, government officials on the committee rejected such a view saying that the issue will take years to resolve. Naturally the families are not satisfied with such a reaction.

We have the right to ask about the role of Jordanian diplomatic missions, whose main task is to protect and serve the interest of Jordanians abroad. We believe that helping our prisoners will boost the image of Jordan abroad and at home.

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Administration

Mother Teresa's health

Continued from page 1

"It'll collapse in 10 years. Nothing is holding it up," predicts Dr. Aroup Chatterjee, a British-educated general practitioner who is one of Calcutta's most outspoken critics of the missionary, others admiringly call the "saint of the gutters."

"It's not going to stop with her," counters the Rev. T.C. Joseph, a South Indian-born member of another Catholic order, the Salesians of Don Bosco. "This show is not run by human reckonings, senior management and things like that. It is run by another hand, which they seem to believe in."

Succession is not a matter that members of the order care to talk about.

"Everything we have had to say, we have said, so we're giving no more interviews," said Sister Priscilla Lewis, the sole nun at the order's four-story, whitewashed "Mother House" headquarters here who is empowered to speak to the media. "God bless you."

An Anglo-Indian and former schoolteacher from Shillong in the jungle-covered hills near the frontier with Bangladesh, Sister Lewis is considered at the moment to be the top candidate to follow Mother Teresa as the order's leader, whenever that day comes.

"She's the one who does the organization, the coordination," said a Calcutta executive who has frequent contact with the order. People who know Sister Lewis have called her "businesslike," "no-nonsense" and "taciturn."

Sister Lewis joined the order in 1957 and has done service in the United States.

Another putative successor, Sister Agnes Das, a Bengali who was Mother Teresa's first disciple, has been dropped from the council created in 1989 to help the aging founder run the Missionaries of Charity's affairs.

Lately, the star of Sister Shanti D'Souza, a medical doctor from Bombay who once worked for a pharmaceutical company and who was put in charge of training sisters before

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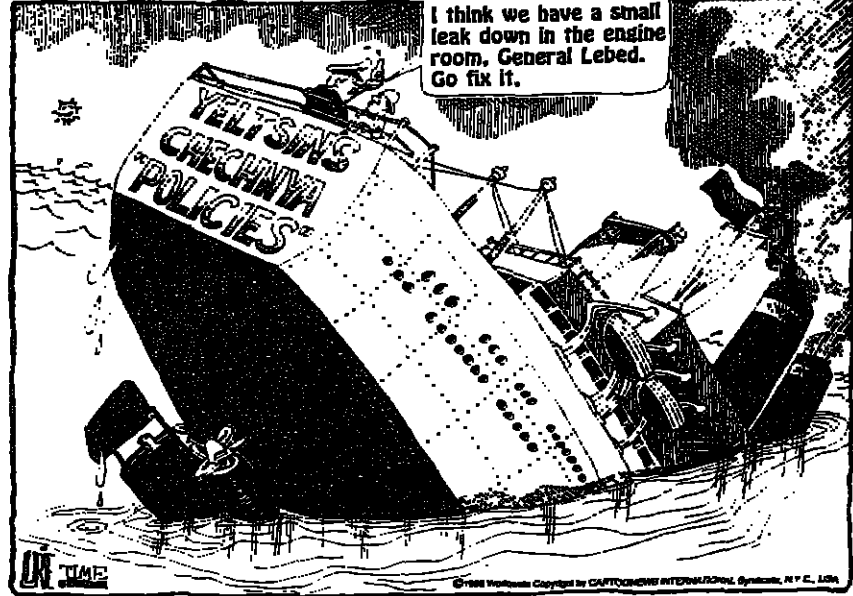
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LURIE'S WORLD



Our Say...

Start dialogue with Iraq

WITH THE defeat of Kurdish factions loyal to Iran and the launching of reconciliation between the government in Baghdad and Massoud Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party one hopes that the confusion, hardship and uncertainty that surrounded events of the last two weeks will now end.

Saddam Hussein's intervention in Iraqi Kurdistan now seems as a necessary move to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. This is evident from the world-wide condemnation of the US aggression against southern Iraq last week and ensuing rift in the US-led alliance over Washington's long-term objectives in Iraq. The positions of France, China and Russia, among others, should be built upon in order to bring the Iraqi question into the forefront of regional and international issues.

This is where a unified Arab stand is needed. It is now clear that Washington's policy in containing Saddam Hussein had created fertile ground for attempts to divide this Arab country and create precedents. That policy has proven to be short-sighted, if not barbaric, as the human cost of maintaining the UN sanctions against Iraq mounts.

The collapse of America's policy with regard to Iraq is an occasion for an overall review of the Iraqi file before the UN and the international community. Getting rid of Saddam can no longer be a justifiable cause to maintain the sanctions or to allow Iraq and its communities to fall prey to regional ambitions.

The Arabs, who for the first time in many years had come out to express their rejection of the current policy, have a moral and strategic responsibility to start dialogue with the Iraqi regime. We say this as we remind the Americans that even in the darkest hour in Bosnia's modern history, Washington and the Europeans continued to talk to Bosnian Serb leaders about a political settlement. The result was the Dayton agreement which became the foundation on which a peaceful resolution to the conflict in the Balkans was based.

America itself negotiated with North Vietnam at the height of its bloody involvement in Indochina and it also opened indirect lines of communications with foes like Iran under Khomeini and with the PLO before the launching of the Middle East peace process.

The Arabs should make use of the latest developments to launch a new initiative whose main objective is to open channels of communication with Baghdad, start a dialogue about Iraq's readiness to implement UN resolutions in order to be rehabilitated into the international community. The Arabs should also insist that the oil-for-food deal be reactivated in order to end Iraq's humanitarian plight.

Such an Arab initiative would give our friends in France, Russia and elsewhere the ammunition they need to press for a new UN policy on Iraq. Without their help and support, the United States will continue to act unilaterally in its blind effort to get rid of Saddam Hussein. ■

Mosques, sacred places call us to awe

By Vern Barnett

THE KING Abdullah Mosque is glorious without being opulent, clean of time without being severe. Built under the administration of an official whose nephew, now an American, lives in the Kansas City area, the mosque is named after the first king of Jordan.

Although I am drawn to the huge dome and the twin minarets, my interest is not primarily historical or architectural.

My focus is instead religious because as I arrive, the muezzin is calling the faithful to salat, prayer.

It is noon, so this is the second of the five daily periods of

prayer. I remove my shoes and peer into the mosque. Here is a place that declared the unity of God and the kinship of all peoples. While one can pray anywhere, its mosque perfects the Muslim ideals to cleanliness, community and freedom from distraction.

The spheric roof symbolizes the believer's submission to the will of God in all aspects of life, personal and communal.

Later I am shown other facilities on the building that also declare kinship. One large conference chamber is equipped with microphones and headsets at every seat so those of different tongues can speak and

hear translations of the proceedings.

I think of churches, synagogues, temples, guardhouses, meeting houses, groves, shrines and other sacred places. All of them, through their particular forms and histories, call us to awe, to gratitude to service, to centeredness in what is most important in our lives. I feel right at home.

Barnett is minister-in-residence at the World Faiths Centre, for Religious Experience and study in Overland Park. This is a short piece that appeared in the *Kansas City Star* after the writer visited Jordan. ■

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Islam and the West

Amnesia and antagonism

By Erskine B. Childers

Editor's note: Erskine B. Childers is former senior advisor to the UN Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation. Of Irish descent, he came to be known as the "disobedient civil servant" for being one of the most vocal advocates of reform at the international body. He retired in 1989 after 22 years of service. A prolific writer, his latest included *Challenges to the UN: Building a Safer World* and, with Sir Brian Urquhart, *Renewing the United Nations System*.

In this article, Childers examines the interface between the West and Islam and how it has been affected by misperceptions throughout the long interaction between the two cultures.

"Prejudice and partisanship obscure the critical faculty and preclude objective investigation ... Another reason making untruth unavoidable in historical information is reliance upon transmitters," Ibn Khaldun in 1377 in *The Muqaddimah*.

"All the fears, animosities, and suspicions of the time (of the great battle between Christian Europe and the World of Islam) ... form part of the literary heritage of every educated European (leaving) in his subconscious a smaller or larger of prejudices," wrote Walid Khalidi in 1957.

The cautions of one of the fathers of Sociology, Ibn Khaldun, on the factors that can distort historical perspective are much in need on the frontier between Islam and the West today. For at no other interface between two cultures are there so many handicaps to open examination of the propositions of the one by the other.

The contemporary dialogue between the West and Islam over democracy and human rights is profoundly affected by them. Not least of these handicaps is the quality of the information conveyed about Islam and Arabs within Western society. In a time span of over 1200 years, these bodies of information have acquired the attributes of Ibn Khaldun's "traditions."

The principal transmitters within the West of traditions of outlook upon Islam have proven highly unreliable. With the exception of culturally liberated sociologists and social anthropologists, a relative handful of historians, and a small minority of contemporary religious and lay public commentators, a systematically biased outlook upon Islam has permeated the Western world. By "systemic bias" the writer will suggest, in the first place, negative perceptual forces that have pervaded Western religion, lay scholarship, education, public political leadership, public information through media, the West's cultural products, and most of its states foreign policies.

There is, however, a second dimension: the West's bias against Islam involves much that has long been below the collective conscious. It amounts to what may be described as the largest fit of collective amnesia in known intercultural history. If ever there was fertile ground for an extension of Klineberg's science of "national character" to a science of the "character of a culture" and its reaction to other cultures, it lies on the frontier between the West and Islam. The dialogue across this frontier is thus the most paradoxical and most confused

of all dialogues between the Judeo-Christian world and other cultures.

By no accident, over the last thousand years it has also been by far the most recurrently explosive. "... the Arabian fleet might have sailed without a naval combat into the mouth of the Thames. Perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet." Gibbon on the defeat of the Arabs at Tours and Poitiers in 732.

"Thus were the Franks, who had once nearly conquered Damascus, Egypt, and many other lands, expelled from all of Syria ... God grant that they never set foot here again!" Abu'l Fida' on the defeat of the Crusaders by Khalil in 1291.

Across this volatile frontier runs the longest memories of external physical threat, for either society, from any source. For the West, the memory extends over 12 centuries, from when the "Saracens" came out of Arabia and in a

As the Islamic Arab heartland passed under Ottoman control in the 16th century these memories of Western Christian attack persisted, to be reinforced by Dutch seizure of Java and Sumatra by 1667, and the later British subcontinent over Muslims in the Indian subcontinent and Malaya. The lull in the Arab world ended in 1798 with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, beginning a new era of rival European imperialisms that saw the entire region from Morocco to Iraq wrested from the Ottomans and subjugated to France, Italy and Britain between 1830 and 1922.

The great majority of Muslims everywhere believe this era of Western imperialism continues to the present day, albeit in different guises. This conviction is continuously sustained by Western policies supporting or condoning the behavior of Israel as a colonial settler-state. It is further reinforced by recurring Western assertions of "strategic interest" in Middle Eastern countries; by almost continuous covert Western inter-

ures as part of itself.

Contrary to one of the deepest Western myths, Christians as Christians were not all backed to pieces by scimitars as the Arabs fought their way across the Mediterranean shore; as civilians they were allowed to continue practicing their faith. At Jerusalem itself, the Arab commander Omar halted and concluded a treaty with its dignitaries guaranteeing Christians and Jews freedom of worship subject only to a tax on "non-believers." In contrast, when the first Crusaders arrived in 1099 they entered the city by a ruse, and savaged it in a bloodbath, massacring its Muslims. And in a tragic irony of history that echoes down the centuries to the present, but is little known in the West, the Crusaders also burned the Jews of Jerusalem alive in their synagogues.

Most sacred Christian and Jewish places were preserved intact throughout Muslim Arab rule. At the worst moments of anger among Muslims towards the West, the Christian and Jewish religions have not been reviled. The contrast with the Christian churches' historical treatment of Islam could scarcely be sharper. As early as the eighth century Islam was declared a schismatic heresy. By 778 theological hostility was fusing with the beginning of the concept of the Church as an army encamped on the soil of Christendom. Relentlessly, in theology, in Western literature, and in the foreign policy of the Christian Church, a picture was constructed of Islam as a treacherous assault on The One True Faith, and of Muslims as cunning, devious virtual sub-humans deserving of no compassion before the sword.

The Arab historian Ibn Jubayr, journeying from Spain through Crusader-occupied Palestine in 1099 noted "disturbing words spoken about the Prophet." Dante consigned Mohammed to an explicitly described eternal physical torture (cleavage from cranium to anus) in the eighth-circle of Hell—the second-worst, reserved for disseminators of scandal and schism. By 1511, the Portuguese imperial adventurer Afonso Albuquerque, fresh from his triumphant massacre of Moors at Goa, instructed his sailors and soldiers as they prepared to take Malacca about "the great service which we shall perform to Our Lord in casting the Moors out of this country and in quenching the fire of the Sect of Mahomet so that it may never burst out again hereafter."

Albuquerque then invoked the service to the Portuguese King, in words that well illustrate the combined anti-Muslim and mercantile origins of the very rise of the Western empires: "If we take this trade of Malacca away from them Calicut and Mecca will be entirely ruined and Venice will receive no spices unless her merchants buy them in Portugal."

Portugal, and then other European powers, succeeded in destroying Muslim commerce, but Islam itself refused to be "quenched." The indignation of Christian authority that this "sect" should continue to command large popular support in the world became embedded in its Western perception of all Muslims as Arabs. The abiding evil of Islam was that it had (and has) the audacity to invoke and associate itself with Christianity and Judaism, under "only one God" yet to claim that it is the ultimate repository of the same one God's messages. ■

Despite their sense of centuries of hostility from the West, and even where rejecting some of its current values and behavioral systems for their own society, Muslims demonstrate a high degree and cognizance of Western culture, and always have.

100 years reached through Iberia into the heart of France, Gibbon's dread "what if" about Arab ships landing teachers of the Quran in England (and, interestingly, about circumcision) epitomizes the collective Western sense of relief that Charles Martel halted the spread of Islam in Western Europe at the Battles of Tours and Poitiers.

The last significant Muslim community was ejected from Spain in 1492, but other Muslims had already appeared in the eastern Mediterranean and southeastern Europe in 1354 in the form of the Ottoman Turks. For Muslims, the memory of European assault into their lands reaches back to the Crusades, which extended from 1096 to 1291. By 1245, only months after Crusaders had made their final withdrawal from Jerusalem, the next phase of Western imperial encirclement was beginning with missions like that of the Umbrian friar Placidius to the court of the Great Khan to propose a European-Mongol alliance against Islam. No actual alliance was consummated. But when in 1258 Khan Hulagu (grandson of Jenghis Khan) destroyed Baghdad, one of the original source-centres of Arab civilization, "Christian Europe rejoiced."

Portuguese and Spanish discovery and mercantile missions now girdled the globe, destroying Muslim centres and their inhabitants with religious ferocity. In Islam they (and Jews) are "People of the Book," and Muslim religious commentary has always discussed Jesus, John the Baptist, and other Christian figures in them; by Western arming of Israel and condoning of Israel attacks; and by actual Western military assault.

Islam was a real provocation in many ways. It lay uneasily close to Christianity, (ii) drew on the Judeo-Hellenic traditions, it borrowed creatively from Christianity, it could boast of unrivalled military and political successes," Prof Edward W. said.

This mutual history of military threat, attack and withdrawal was bound to make Western-Islamic relations particularly difficult. There is, however, great paradox and disequilibrium in these relations. Despite their sense of centuries of hostility from the West, and even where rejecting some of its current values and behavioral systems for their own society, Muslims demonstrate a high degree of cognizance of Western culture, and always have. Christianity and Judaism were not merely acknowledged from the outset: their commanding figures are part of the very warp and woof of Islam: its Apostles include Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, with Mohammed the last of them, who received God's final revelation. The Quran states that Christians were "the most disposed to friendship with the faithful." In Islam they (and Jews) are "People of the Book," and Muslim religious commentary has always discussed Jesus, John the Baptist, and other Christian figures

A view from America

Some freedom of speech is forbidden

Carrie Nelle Moye
Star US Correspondent

FREEDOM OF speech is a phrase that commonly dots our conversations, particularly in an election year. It is sometimes used actually to make a point more than just a catchall for those who feel they can justify saying anything they like, anytime they like, anywhere they like. But there is one freedom of speech that most US journalists handle like a hot potato, if they handle it at all. If they do, they tend to be persons who write hate articles or who are affiliated with publications that border on being or are openly discriminatory. It is just something that journalists who are with reputable publications do not want to touch.

This freedom of speech topic is the fear to criticize the role of the United States vis-a-vis Israel, fear to criticize actions occurring within Israel, or even, with no mention of Israel, just writing something favorable concerning Arabic politics or tactics.

To do any of the above, especially if it is more than a one-time phenomenon, is to incur the wrath of a large segment of the population of the US and to be labeled anti-Jewish (by the more educated) or anti-Semitic (by those who do not realize the Arabs are Semites also, tracing their heritage to Abraham, making them cousins of the Jews). This is both a sad and a sorry state.

There are many, many examples, but I shall cite just two that were so blatant as to be ludicrous. During the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (with full prior knowledge of the United States government, though Ariel Sharon, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's newly appointed Minister of Infrastructure—a

ministry created especially for Sharon) marched to the city of Beirut, which the US had specifically forbidden) one of NBC's most hallowed commentators wrote at length on the subsequent destruction of the city. Following this publication, he was soundly chastised and it is believed by most that his career basically remained stabilized until his death, due to this one perceived sensitive US.

A United Nations diplomat who was residing in Beirut during the invasion, was among the first group of persons allowed to enter what had been the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatilla following the bloody massacre carried out by the Christian Lebanese (Phalangist) party with open assistance by the Israeli invaders.

This diplomat, fluent in six languages, was invited to address Parliaments, give television and radio interviews throughout Europe, and then was asked to come to the States to appear on Good Morning America—all to speak on what he had seen personally of the invasion of the massacre site. He asked me if GMA was a reputable news program; I replied that at that time it was rated the Number One morning television news show.

The diplomat came to the US for the scheduled interview, but it continued to be postponed. Being quite puzzled, he requested my as-

sistance and began investigating just why he was being delayed day after day. Finally we uncovered primary source to whom we pledged secrecy. Suffice it to say, too many person wielding much power influenced the network to (un)invite the diplomat—certainly a first for him. The Canadians, however, were eager to get a first-hand picture of what had occurred, so he went there, gave five interviews, including being on Canadian NBC, and had to decline other invitations due to time constraints.

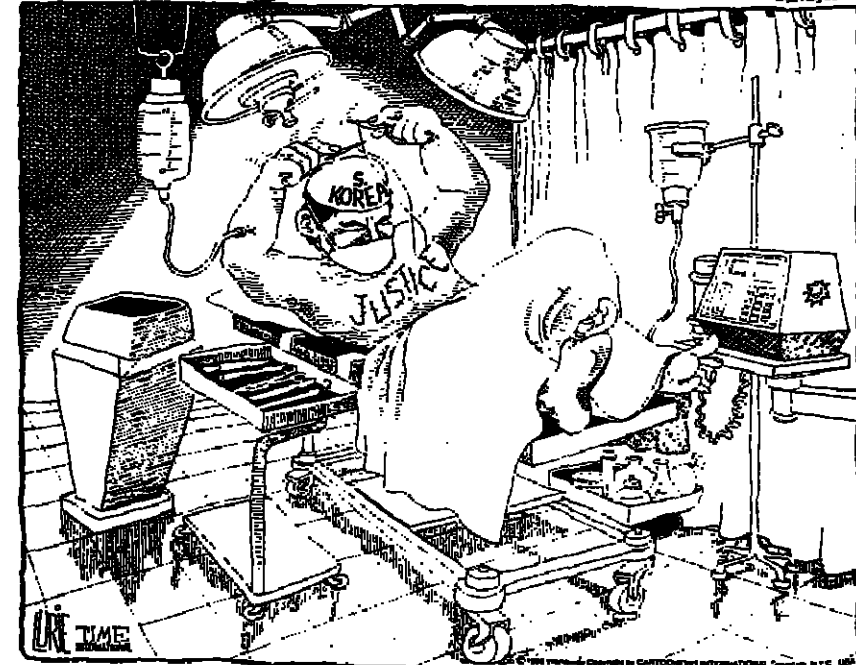
Be assured that Europeans receive an ever so much more balanced view of what is happening in the Middle East. But we Americans (United States Americans) do not want to know the reality of many situations. This is the curtailing of freedom of speech of our own media. Writers and editors need to keep their jobs; publications, television and radio want to continue to function.

The greatest irony is that a legitimate journalist immediately is suspect if s/he shows any version of an Arab/Israeli confrontation, regardless of what the journalist has written before. And such a journalist is given a label. Yet Israel calls itself the most democratic state in the Middle East. The Israeli journalist is free to express her/himself openly even though it

may well be critical of the tactics of its own country, just as we are free to criticize US politicians and policies. Indeed, Israel held the largest protest anywhere against the Sabra/Shatilla massacres.

Israeli peace-lovers—an enormously large group—have condemned first Menachem Begin (who is thought to have died through sorrow as a combination of the death of his wife and his realization that the invasion of Beirut had been a major mistake for Israel, Ariel Sharon, and now Benjamin Netanyahu. But dare an American do so? If so, at what price? ■

LURIE'S WORLD



The painful process of self-healing

Business scene

Privatization, a potential ground for economic growth

Jordan Cement Factories made a profit of gross JD 11,972 in the first half of this year. This is an increase of JD 1,340 over the same period last year. Its net profit, however, was JD 6,158. This represents a decrease of JD 372,000 over the same period last year. A company official said the decrease in profits relate to the increase in the price of electricity and fuel oil as from the beginning of last May.

The Bank of Urban and Rural Development will soon become an investor in the Amman Financial Market. It will deal solely in bonds and securities. However, it is awaiting final approval from the government. It is understood that the bank will only be allowed to deal with two percent of its capital reserve.

Seventy companies are participating in the International Damascus Exhibition that is currently being held. These include construction material, chemicals, engineering, agricultural products, cosmetics, dyeing and plastics. There are 56 businessmen who are taking part.

The Islamic Bank of Jordan has realized profits of more than JD 20 million during the first half of this year. This is more than a 49 percent increase compared to the same period last year. The volume of its deposits has increased by 4.1 percent to reach JD 536.18 million.

The Ahli (National) Bank made profits of JD 3.5 million for the first half of the year. This is more or less the same as was made in the same time last year. About 73 percent of the profits were made through its branches in Jordan, while 27 percent made in its 10 branches in Lebanon, Cyprus and the Palestinian National Authority areas.

In a bid to meet the increasing demand for its kitchen and office furniture, the Jordan Wood Industries Co. (JWICO) has completed its expansion at a cost of JD 3.8 million. The company built a new plant spreading over an area of 6800sq meters annexed to the operating plant. JWICO obtained new computer systems to boost its productivity. Its sales over the first half of this year recorded a growth of 36%.

AMMAN (Star)—In its effort to activate the economy, the government recently adopted a series of economic legislations aiming at giving the private sector a major role in economic development. Cooperation between the public and private sectors is the new catchword to provide a new environment for investments.

Economic growth in Jordan is mainly influenced by a number of factors, among which is the peace accords that were signed between Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Israel. Although the fruits of peace have as yet to be forthcoming, there is room for optimism.

This is evidenced by Jordan's positive economic growth for 1995. The economy is undergoing an economic adjustment program that began in 1992. The first phase ended in 1993, and the second phase will continue until 1998.

Jordan's economic performance is improving through incentives to local and foreign investors and opportunities for competition. These steps are in line with the free-market and privatization that is going on in the world.

The Amman Economic Summit held last October played a great role in achieving growth and economic stability in the Kingdom. The GDP was up by 6.4 percent to reach JD 2.6 billion in 1995. Inflation remained under control at four percent.

The dinar maintained its strength and stability against the dollar. The deficit in the balance of payment fell to 4.3 percent. Also external debts fell by 5.6 percent and Jordan's imports rose by 10 percent while its exports leaped by 25 percent.

Remittances reached JD 86.2 million in 1995, that is a rise of 13 percent compared with 1994.

The tourism sector reached its peak in 1995. The net income from tourism rose by 72 percent to reach JD 226 million. More than one million tourists visited Jordan in 1995; this is an increase of over 35 percent. As a result many hotels are presently being built.

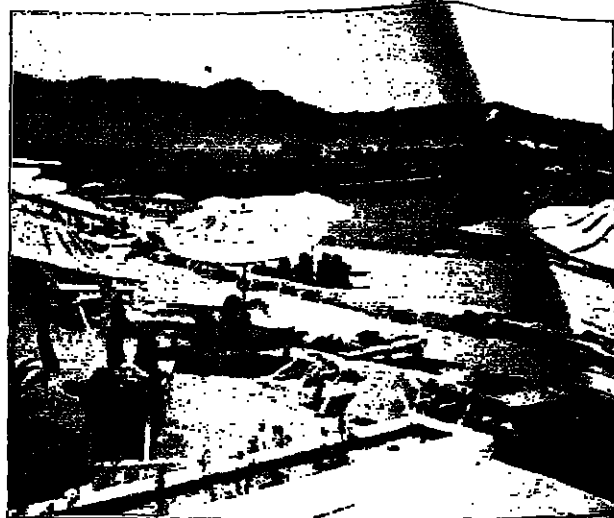
The 1995 annual report of the Housing Bank praised the government's move towards economic adjustment and its move towards privatization.

National savings as a ratio of GDP rose by 27.4 percent, and the year witnessed the setting up of 4383 new companies at a capital of JD 412 million.

The standard costs of living were 109.5 for 1995, compared with 107 in 1994, this shows relative stability.

Assets at banks rose by 12 percent in 1995 to reach JD 8432.9 million, and their deposits rose by seven percent, to reach JD 5787.5 million, the Housing Bank report added.

The annual report of the Islamic Bank pointed out that



the economy has successfully overcome the hesitation stage and moving to a stable and continuous growth.

The Central Bank of Jordan embarked on a monetary policy to control liquidity and provide a conducive climate for banking and the private sector. This stabilized the dinar against foreign currencies. Moreover, it encouraged people to underwrite their assets in the dinar, the bank added.

Commenting on the regulations related to reducing income tax on a large number of economic sectors and cuts in customs of imported commodities, the report of the Jordan National Bank said that such

steps represent a successful start towards comprehensive economic and financial reform in the country. These steps also consolidate Jordan's position in its GATT negotiations and its dialogue with the European Union, the report of Jordan National Bank added.

But the government is in the forefront of privatization. It offered more than 31 million shares of four industrial companies to local and foreign investors. The share value of these is estimated at JD 108.1 million.

Also, the government is negotiating with 14 international companies to buy its stake in the Jordan Cement Factories Co. It is also planning to sell its shares in five firms before the end of this year.

The government aims to privatize the Aqaba railway. This is part of a more ambitious program to reorganize public transport in Amman and to convert the Public Transport Corp. into a government department and turning its fleet of buses into the hands of the private sector.

Despite the continuous economic recession in the local and regional areas, and the problems that are facing the promotion of Jordanian exports and the high costs of raw materials all over the world, still some industrial local corporations were able to achieve good results over 1995 and in the first half of this year.

However, some companies are still cautious about the local market. They justify such tendency by the fluctuating economic and political situations coupled with the economic sanctions against Iraq and expectations that it may be delayed for the time being.

Business Chronicle

By Mohammad Adawiya

Competition, not just privatization

WITH ALL the talk of the privatization plans for Royal Jordanian airlines, perhaps it's an appropriate time to take a closer look at the country's national carrier.

Notorious for being mismanaged, and debt laden, in addition to possible graft, the airline, through government support, continues to grow.

A quick comparison of the airline's operations with that of a decade ago, however, reveals an airline which is expanding far quicker than both its resources and the market warrants. While kilometers flown, for example, are up roughly by 48 percent over a decade ago, the number of passengers carried has actually dropped by 1.5 percent. Moreover, while passenger kilometers flown have grown by 24 percent, available seat kilometers has fell by 8.5 percent.

On top of these statistics, the company's fleet has only increased by two aircrafts in the last 10 years. Add to that the persistent time delays, and you have an airline which is in need of change.

Privatization alone, however, will not yield the desired results. Competition, in conjunction with privatization measures, is needed to truly turn the airline around. Competition today only exists on the domestic level in the form of buses or private cars. Considering that only 0.45 percent of the kilometers flown have been domestic, the government, as part of its plans to privatize the airline, needs to open-up the industry to more competition.

Competition is indeed the ingredient missing from most discussions about future economic reform programs. Unfortunately, many think that to privatize, is to introduce competition. The two concepts are very different, with privatization alone only ensuring a change in ownership.

BBME profit shows confidence in region

THE BRITISH Bank of the Middle East (BBME) reported a consolidated profit of £32 million for the first half of 1996. This is compared with a profit of £31 million for the first half of 1995 and £27 million for the second half of 1995.

The bank recorded a satisfactory result in most areas, with improved performances in the UAE, Bahrain, Lebanon and Oman.

Middle East Finance Company, a subsidiary of BBME in the UAE, showed strong profit growth. Sir William Purves, Chairman of the HSBC says: "The British Bank of the Middle East recorded a satisfactory performance in the first half of 1996, despite some unsettling tensions in the region. Of note are strong asset growth in the UAE and in our UAE-based car finance subsidiary, Middle East Finance Company."

The bank's continued emphasis on technical and infrastructure improvements has resulted in a moderate rise in operating expenses. "However the resulting higher level of service to our customers will contribute to future business growth and profitability," Purves said.

With common service standards and procedures through-

out the HSBC Group, our customers continue to benefit from BBME's membership of one of the world's largest banking and financial services organizations."

The bank registered satisfactory improvement in profitability, particularly in the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Lebanon and the Middle East Finance Company.

Its cost income ratio has fallen to 46.6 percent due to growth in net interest income set against moderate increases in operating expenses.

In order to support asset growth and business opportunities, BBME raised £25 million of additional equity and \$40 million subordinated term debt from within the Group.

BBME bought a five percent stake in the British Arab Commercial Bank (formerly UBAF Bank Limited) at a cost of £7.25 million.

It has purchased a 40 percent stake in HSBC Financial Services (Middle East) Ltd., at a cost of £3.5 million.

Attributable profit grew by £1 million, or three percent, from £31 million in the first half of 1995 to £32 million in the first half of 1996.

Net interest income was £9 million, or 18 percent, above first half 1995. Average inter-

est-earning assets increased from £3.31 percent to 3.53 percent. Growth in customer advances, particularly in the UAE, together with a higher interest spread, contributed to the rise. Growth in new business activity in the Middle East Finance Company led to a 34 percent increase in its net interest income.

Other operating income rose slightly to £29 million from £28 million, due to a marginal increase in net fees and commissions.

Operating expenses increased by £4 million, or 11 percent, over first half 1995. This was largely due to investment in the introduction of new technology, and staff development to continued business and income growth.

The charge for bad and doubtful debts reflected an increase in the general provision due to the growth in customer loans, together with specific provisions in Bahrain, Geneva, Lebanon and the UAE. Offsetting this were good recoveries in Oman.

Total assets have increased by £177 million, or 5 percent, from 31 December 1995. Customer lending grew by £218 million, or 15 percent, with increases in most areas, particularly the UAE. In addition, there was a marked increase in treasury bills due to both Bahrain and Oman deploying excess liquidity in Government Treasury Bills.

The BBME has opened a branch in Baku, Azerbaijan. It is the first major international bank to open for business in Azerbaijan. BBME, a principal member of the HSBC Group since 1959, is the largest and most widely-represented foreign bank in the Middle East. Founded in 1889, BBME was for years the only bank committed to supporting the area.

McDonald's to open in Amman
A commitment to community success

AMMAN (Star)—Armoursh Tourist Investment Co. (ATI), agents of McDonald's restaurant in Jordan, held a press conference last Saturday at the headquarters of McDonald's, Jordan's first branch in Mecca Street, West Amman.

Participants were briefed on the final works of construction before the restaurant opens its doors to the public in November.

The Director of ATI, Mr Ali Armoursh highlighted the importance of opening a McDonald's restaurant in Jordan. He said McDonald's enjoys a worldwide reputation.

He added that the opening of the restaurant in mid-November will coincide with the Kingdom's celebrations of His Majesty King Hussein's birthday.

McDonald's will have more branches in Jordan. A month after its inauguration, two branches will open at Sweifiyyeh, and Al Taibat village at Wihdat (east Amman). This is in addition to more branches that are expected to open next year in Zarqa, Aqaba and Irbid.

"McDonald's existence in Amman is likely to boost Jordan's economy as it creates 400-500 job opportunities for

Jordanians", Armoursh added.

The employees who will be working in McDonald's restaurant—Amman were sent abroad for training in marketing, services, reception. This is besides the required training on how to manage and run such a big institution.

About \$300,000 was allocated to finance the training program.

The restaurant's administration is planning to build a training center which will provide McDonald's, inside and outside the country, with highly qualified Jordanian cadres, Armoursh maintained.

Since it started in 1955, with a total of 18,000 branches all over the world, McDonald's sought to satisfy customers at all costs.

By 1999, McDonald's hopes to have 10 branches in



Jordan.

A bakery, which is the first of its kind, will be built in Jordan in cooperation with a number of investors. The bakery will operate using the latest technology, Armoursh said. He added this points to McDonald's contribution to economic development in Jordan.

McDonald's is not seen by its owners as a mere place to

eat and have fun but rather as a social structure that cares. Among the restaurant's basic services offered to society are employment, training, youth development, education, sports, environment protection, public health and safety.

To help students minimize the burden of educational expenses on their families' shoulders, McDonald's offers them part time jobs.

Mr Hassan Owaida, a development manager in ATI said that the McDonald's—Amman is spread over 2500sq metres. The area of the premises is 550sq metres. It includes a hall for children's entertainment, fire extinguishing systems and water-proof walls which are also fire resistant. Another hall offers special services to customers together with a rest house and rooms for workers.

The building has 10 counter desks to provide customers with faster service. A parking lot is constructed to help customers receive service while in their cars, Owaida added.

McDonald's daily sales are estimated at \$1.4 million and \$26 billion annually, Armoursh said. "A new branch for McDonald's is opened every five hours all over the world."

British minister leads a business delegation to Jordan

BRITAIN'S MINISTER for Construction, Mr James Clappson, is leading a delegation of 15 senior British businessmen and officials including construction companies, engineers, solicitors, chartered quantity surveyors, risk management and brokers, investment bankers and manufacturers of building materials.

The mission will be looking at commercial and investment opportunities in a number of fields including tourism, railways, airports, roads, bridges, seaports and water.

The minister and the accompanying mission arrived to Aqaba from Eilat on 9 September and will leave Jordan on Friday 13 September. They meet with senior

Jordanian officials and businessmen the Aqaba Regional Authority, the Ports Corporation, and the Aqaba Power Substation which is being built by the British Rolls Royce.

Today, Thursday, he will hold a press conference in the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. He is also visiting the Ministries of Water, Transport and Environment.

The Minister is visiting the newly constructed British owned Ready Mix Concrete plant (RMC) in Amman. There will be five more trade missions to Jordan in the next five months.

MARKET WATCH

7 - 10 September

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
The Industrial Commercial Arab Electoral Industries Amman Investment Bank	United Land Development The Industrial Commercial Jerusalem Insurance	Jordan Woolen Mills JIMCO Intermediate Petro Chemicals	International Education & Invest The Industrial Commercial Jordan Woolen Industry
Jordan Press Foundation Nayef Dins & Mousa Arab Insurance	Jordan Press Foundation Vehicles Owners Federation National Steel	Tobacco & Cigarettes Universal Textiles, Manuf. Arab Electoral Industries	Woollen Industry National Steel Real Estate Investment
General Price Pointer Trade Volume Stock Volume	145,350 1774793 645525	145,950 1164949 948511	146,310 1051903 706922
Highest Traded Stocks Arab Bank	Arab Bank Dar Al-Dawa	Arab Bank Dar Al-Dawa	Arab Bank

All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

Series of financial report is started by research center

THE ISRAELI/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI) published *Banking Law Reform in the Palestinian Territories* as part of its ongoing project, the Israeli/Palestinian Business Law Initiative.

IPCRI, the only joint Israeli/Palestinian think tank, organized this project is publishing a series of commercial law reports analyzing current laws in the Palestinian territories and proposing urgently needed reforms.

(CIPE) through a grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). The Palestinian Monetary Authority has incorporated many of IPCRI's recommendations into the draft banking law which it will submit to the Palestinian Legislative Council later this year. Moreover, IPCRI's model income tax law was adopted as the basis for the draft income tax law currently being prepared by the Palestinian National Authority's finance ministry. The PNA is also considering amending its new investment law in line with IPCRI proposals.

The Business Law Initiative was created to address the need for legal reform in the PNA areas, using IPCRI's

unique ability to harness both Palestinian and Israeli legal and economic expertise, particularly with respect to promoting economic relations on a basis of equity. Through conferences of Israeli and Palestinian business lawyers and legal research projects.

Banking Law Reform in the Palestinian Territories aims to assist the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Palestinian Monetary Authority in developing a unified modern banking statute for the West Bank and Gaza. The report recommends that the present banking law in the West Bank be substantially amended and broadly applied in both the West Bank and Gaza—where the present banking law is

entirely obsolete. In this way, the basic structure of the West Bank law will be preserved while its substantive provisions are modernized to meet the needs of the Palestinian economy.

The report also analyzes the Palestinian banking sector and its regulation under current legislation and discusses badly needed legal reforms. These include statutory and regulatory changes in the areas of bank licensure and supervision by the Palestinian Monetary Authority, monitoring systems of payments, and mechanisms to promote lending and forestall bank-facilitated capital flight. Model statutory articles are provided in each of these legal areas.

Palestine Post



Secret Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in 1995 on Jerusalem

■ Palestinian and Israeli officials met secretly to discuss the Jerusalem issue in 1995, the French-based *La Tribune* revealed.

Negotiations took place between 13-14 May, 1995 at the French Corporation for International Relations, a semi-official establishment. The corporation affirmed that the talks were held in the presence of 'supervisors' from the French Foreign Ministry.

"The discussions were convened at the request of the former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres and the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

Negotiators had no difficulties over approving seven major articles relating to Jerusalem, the magazine said. These included the establishment of a Palestinian state, dividing Jerusalem into an Arab and a Jewish section, each is directed by municipal director. "The two sides rejected the internationalization of the holy city," the magazine disclosed.

It added that "the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the election of Likud Leader Benjamin Netanyahu turned everything upside down."

PNA touristic projects for Cairo economic summit

■ "Contacts are being made between the Ministry of Tourism of the Palestine National Authority (PNA), the Higher Council for Tourism, the Ministry of Commerce and the private sector to prepare tourism projects for the Cairo economic summit next November," Abdullah Hijazi, undersecretary at the Ministry of Tourism said. The projects include hotels, entertainment cities, touristic restaurants and parks in the Palestinian territories.

Mr Hijazi hopes that such projects will encourage foreign businessmen to invest in the Palestinian territories. On another hand, Mr Hijazi pointed out that a high ranking Spanish delegation will arrive in the Palestinian territories soon to meet with President Arafat. The delegation wants to contribute to the projects.

Other tourism sites in the north will be 're-activated' by a local company in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism, Mr Hijazi explained.

Israeli recognition of the Palestinian nation

■ Commenting on the recent meeting between the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, the leftist Israeli "peace bloc" said this step is an Israeli recognition of the existence of the Palestinian nation.

Whether it was a personal wish or not, Netanyahu has finally met with Arafat. Such a step is likely to change the already established views about the Israeli right-wing prime minister since his election last May.

A statement issued by the "peace bloc" said that "by Netanyahu, the other half of the Israeli people which severely opposes the Oslo accords with Palestinians starts its first, though hesitant, step in the long and hard road toward peace."

"Even if conflicts may rise in the next phase, such meeting has its symbolic significance," the peace bloc, concluded its statement.

Sharon plan on redeployment at Hebron

■ Hebron is a thorny issue in the negotiations aimed to activate the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track.

The 1995 peace accords signed between Palestinians and Israelis call on Israel to withdraw its troops from 80 percent of the total area of Hebron. The redeployment of troops in Hebron was delayed several times, since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was sworn in.

Israeli Minister of Infrastructure, Ariel Sharon suggests that reducing the area under the Israeli rule while doubling the number of its Jewish settlers to exceed 3000. He calls for keeping 2000 Palestinians in the Israeli-run "small enclave" in Hebron. Sharon wants to have the right to control rioters in the Arab section of Hebron.

Qadhafi opens second stage of great man-made river project

By Ingrid Solem

AS PART of the celebrations marking the 27th anniversary of Libya's September First Revolution, Colonel Mu'amar Qadhafi inaugurated the second stage of the Great Man-Made River project. Speaking in Garboulia to an audience that included Libyans and foreign guests, Qadhafi stated "This is the biggest answer to America and all the evil forces who accuse us of being concerned with terrorism. We are only concerned with peace and progress. America is against life and progress; it pushes the world towards darkness."

Qadhafi and foreign dignitaries simultaneously pushed buttons which caused a barrier to open, allowing water to gush forth into a reservoir.

Louis Farrakhan, leader of the US-based Nation of Islam, who was one of those taking part in the ceremony, described the Great Man-Made River as "another miracle in the desert."

The newly-inaugurated stage of the project will provide Tripoli and the surrounding region with fresh water pumped from sub-Saharan aquifers and transported over hundreds of kilometers through vast networks of pre-stressed concrete pipelines. Because a mountainous formation known as "Jabal Nefusa" blocks the natural flow of the piped water from the areas where the aquifers are located to the coastal plain, it was necessary to drill a tunnel through the mountain and install a pumping station. It is this tunnel, located at Tarbunah, that US Secretary of Defense William Perry earlier this year threatened to attack with nuclear weapons on the pretext that it was a chemical weapons factory.

Perry has not been available for comment following yesterday's inauguration of the water-pumping facility.

The Great Man-Made River is the largest water transport project ever undertaken, and has been described as the "eighth wonder of the world."

Under construction since 1984, it will when completed carry more than five million cubic meters of water per day across the desert to coastal areas, vastly increasing the amount of arable land. The total cost of the huge project is expected to exceed \$25 billion.

Although Libya at present is more than 95 percent desert, during the time of Christ the northern part of the country was a flourishing agricultural region. The ruins of ancient cities such as Leptis Magna and Sabratha, which today lie half-buried in the sand, are silent witnesses to this bygone era. The goal of the Libyan people, embodied in the Great Man-Made River project, is to restore the productivity of these formerly fertile lands and to make Libya once again a source of agricultural abundance, capable of producing adequate food and water to supply its own needs and to share with neighboring countries. ■

Europeans show little desire to support US raids on Iraq

By Charles Trueheart
LA Times-Washington Post
News Post

PARIS—President Clinton's decision to strike at Iraqi defense positions in two days of missile attacks has fed a growing impression in European capitals, notably this one, that the United States is all too ready to act unilaterally.

The strikes have fractured the Western coalition that President Bush assembled to repulse Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait in 1991. By going over the objections of a prominent ally such as France, the Clinton administration added to a perception that consultation and multilateral action no longer hold an important place in solving global problems, according to European diplomats and analysts.

Clinton's decision last week to move suddenly against Saddam is viewed in many quarters here, even sympathizers, as a piece of American presidential campaign theater. Once again, in the view of many Europeans, committed and important relations between the United States and its traditional allies and trading partners are being sacrificed to American domestic politics.

The diplomatic environment in Europe on Thursday is far different from the one Bush nurtured in the years before the Persian Gulf War. In the intervening years, allies in Europe and elsewhere have found common and unanimous cause in fighting new US laws that blacklist and penalize foreign companies that do business in Iran and Libya—states Washington considers pariahs.

The laws, enacted by a Republican Congress this year and signed with misgiving by Clinton, have generated uncharacteristically bitter opposition among traditional US allies, military partners and friends, among them France, Britain, Germany, Canada and the European Union.

These are the countries whose cooperation the United States seeks in pursuit of its still-evolving vision of an Atlantic security alliance reconfigured to the post-Cold War world. And these are the countries the United States called upon, with mixed results, to support the attacks on Iraq.

The resolve of some of them to resist Clinton's entreaties to support Operation Desert Strike may have been stiffened by their recent experience with the "extraterritorial" trade sanctions. Like the missile strikes,

they are perceived here as blunt instruments of US unilateralism.

The impact on US-European relations could be lasting in at least one respect. By provoking divisions among European countries, the Clinton administration's attacks on Iraq have given France an opening to shape its profile as Baghdad's closest Western friend and Europe's most disputatious American ally.

Even an alliance cheerleader like Margaret Thatcher could not help sounding a bleak note. Last week's events prove once again the only alliance you can count on is the Anglo-American alliance," allowed the former British prime minister and staunch partner of Bush in the Gulf War.

By the evidence of last week, she may be right. Britain and other Commonwealth countries are among a contingent of stalwart supporters of Clinton's policy. Germany and Japan have blessed the operation, though without apparent enthusiasm.

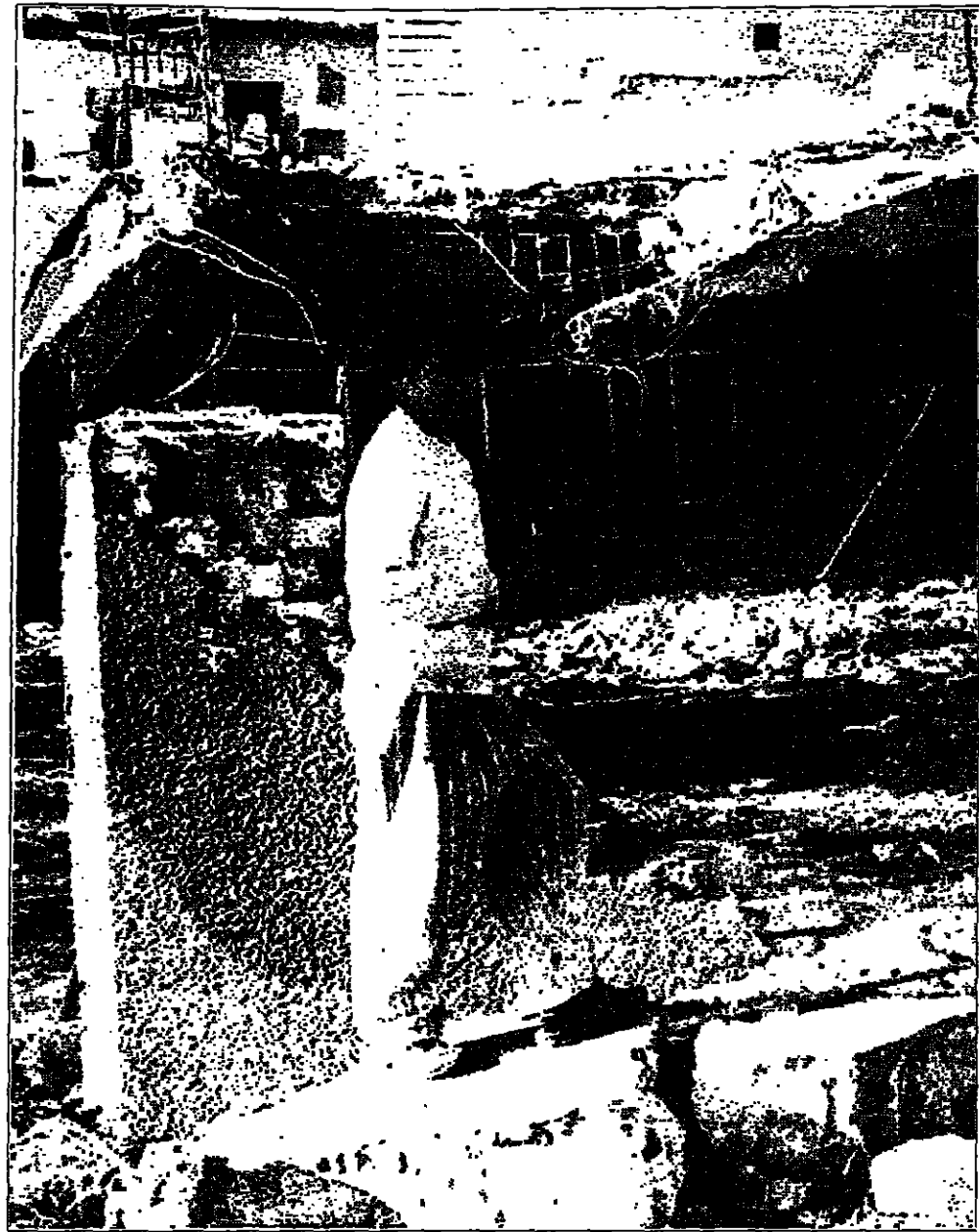
Otherwise, the United States had few of its erstwhile friends along on its latest show of force. Every Arab state, including those who rallied to the allied side in 1991, has condemned the raids. The Russian government has been unusually vituperative in its attacks. Spain and Italy were outwardly cool to the strikes.

The French, in their icy objections to the raids, are acting in their economic and commercial self-interest—they are major customers of Iraqi oil—and also out of their historic self-image as contrarians when it comes to the United States. With the return to power last year of a Gaullist president, Jacques Chirac, France has begun again to flex its old Gaullist muscle.

Chirac has signaled that he wants to mend France's 20-year-old military rupture with NATO and become a central player in the Atlantic alliance. But that broad objective was challenged by the Clinton administration's decision to confront Saddam, a key French ally.

According to Ailie Saunders of the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies, a London think tank, France has an "ideological commitment to an alternative strategy in the Middle East."

Like other European countries, she said, it shares the view of Arab states that are "absolutely paranoid about Iraq splitting up and Iran taking advantage of the power vacuum in Baghdad."



An Iraqi boy looks on at the ruins of a house destroyed by the last US missile attacks

in Baghdad. With an Islamic militant threat at their doorstep in Algeria, the French also look more favorably at secular states like Iraq.

"But if we had followed French strategy leading up to the Gulf War," Saunders said, "Saddam Hussein would still be in Kuwait."

French officials told Secretary of State Warren Christopher last Thursday that France will not help patrol the new, expanded "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq that has been declared by the United States. And France, along with Russia, is still blocking US attempts to forge a common policy retroactively by pushing through a UN Security Council resolution condemning Saddam's original

incursion into Kurdish areas of northern Iraq.

Last Thursday's high-level session in Paris is a staple of the US-French relationship, in which America's tendency to act like a world power sometimes encourages the French to behave likewise.

France, in its defiance of US policies, continues to exercise considerable leverage in Europe and elsewhere. In the view of US officials, that influence comes from its postwar heritage of sometimes-testy relations with the United States.

As one senior State Department official explained it, if an American policy or action meets the rigorous test of the French, it probably meets the more-relaxed standards of the

rest of Europe.

The military strikes in Iraq and the punitive laws on trading with US adversaries both flunk the French test, and could even work in tandem to enhance France's profile as the defender of European autonomy.

The contested legislation penalizing countries that trade with Cuba, Iran and Libya has even helped to dust off some of the cherished rhetoric of anti-Americanism abroad a generation ago.

"These are imperialist laws," a French business leader declared in an interview. "They are imposed on foreign businesses as though American law were world law. We don't like that."

Hesitant handclasp could put peace process on track

By Rebecca Trounson
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—With a hesitant handclasp, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat may have rescued a Middle East peace process that was in danger of disintegrating. But without immediate, intensive discussions on the substantive issues that divide the two sides, the 4 September meeting will remain symbolic—significant only because it marked the first recognition of the Palestinian leadership by the Israeli right wing.

"This is only a beginning," Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said after the hour-long session Wednesday night. "Let's judge it on our ability to put the peace process back on track on the ground."

Uri Savir, the Israeli diplomat who led his country's breakthrough negotiations with the Palestinians in 1993, said he was disappointed that the talks ended with no concrete progress, "simply with an agreement to disagree."

There was no headway, for example, on the timing or specifics of Israel's overdue pullout from Hebron, a volatile city that is the only major population center in the West Bank still occupied by Israeli troops.

Other outstanding matters include security arrangements and Israel's 6-month-old closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Long-term issues are thornier still, including Palestinian aspirations to create an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Netanyahu, in a speech to the leadership of his conservative

Likud Party last Thursday, reiterated previous statements that his government will never allow the establishment of a Palestinian state or the division of Jerusalem.

Still, Savir said, the meeting between Arafat and Netanyahu at the Erez crossing point between Israel and Palestinian-controlled Gaza represented a "very significant first step."

Having attended the meeting, Savir said, "the Israeli prime minister has recognized reality," accepting the idea that any peace negotiations with the Palestinians must begin with Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organization chairman who was elected president of the Palestinian Authority in January.

Such recognition, the diplomat said, is likely to lead to another reality: that the peace process, in order to survive and progress, must include the step-by-step implementation of agreements that have already been signed.

"It's very important to build trust and to constantly keep the dynamics of the process moving forward," Savir said.

Savir applauded Netanyahu's courage in publicly reneging on a vow never to meet the Palestinian leader, although Israelis have become accustomed in recent years to their leaders



meeting Arafat, many still brand him a terrorist, unworthy of such recognition.

"I wouldn't underestimate the difficulty of that for Mr. Netanyahu," Savir said.

Overall, the meeting between Arafat and Netanyahu is considered likely to jumpstart the negotiations, which have been stalled since Israel's 29 May election. Netanyahu defeated Prime Minister Shimon Peres of the left-leaning Labor Party in a vote widely viewed as a referendum on the pace and future of Middle East peace.

"The talks reinforce the idea of peace as the dominant reality of our time," Joseph Alpher, the director of the Israel and Middle East office of the American Jewish Committee, said in Jerusalem. "It's so overwhelming, in fact, that even Netanyahu, after 80 days in office, has had to do an about-face on the subject."

For Arafat, the meeting represented a formal, if grudging, acceptance of him as a peace partner by the hard-line Likud Party, as well as an implicit recognition that he is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. After three years of peacemaking with the Labor Party, Arafat is now free to talk to its political rivals as well.

But that relationship with Likud is unlikely to be as warm as the one Arafat has had with Labor. A political cartoon in the English-language daily Jerusalem Post last Thursday poked fun at Netanyahu for his obvious discomfort during the meeting, showing him gingerly extending his little finger to Arafat.

Still, Alpher said, the meeting provided Arafat with a guarantee of sorts: "Whether the government is left or right, he's now got someone to talk to."

Some saw the handshake as

potentially even more far-reaching. Galia Golan, a founder of the nonpartisan, leftist group Peace Now, said recognition of Arafat will make it more difficult for Netanyahu and other Likud leaders to dismiss Palestinian nationalist claims out of hand.

"If you shake hands with the leader of the Palestinian Authority...you are accepting that they have rights," Golan said. "That's why some people in the Likud Party are upset; they understand that you can't recognize the leader of a national liberation movement and then deny that they have rights."

But some Palestinian analysts criticized Arafat for agreeing to meet the Israeli leader too quickly, without any guarantee that agreements already signed by the two sides will be implemented without further delays.

"Why have we decided to go along with this as Palestinians?" West Bank political scientist Khalil Shikaki asked. "There has been no agreement on any of the issues of substance, but we've allowed the meeting to take place and (have) eased the pressure on Netanyahu. Why?"

Since Netanyahu's election, Palestinian journalists have criticized the governments of Egypt and Jordan for receiving the new prime minister without gaining any specific commitments from his government on the peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

"Now we've done exactly the same thing," Shikaki said. "The Palestinian press has created a perception that things are moving forward on the peace process, and I think that's the wrong message. Netanyahu has made no real compromises yet, except on the symbolic, ideological level" ■

Netanyahu gains support for Mideast policy

By Barton Gellman
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—The mayor of Kiryat Arba, the Jewish settlement at Hebron's edge, hung a black flag outside his house last Thursday. Demonstrators at Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office stood with signs commanding "Thou Shalt Not Betray." And as Netanyahu addressed the Likud Party central committee, a lone woman stood and unfurled an umbrella—a reference, clear to all in the room, to Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler before World War II.

One day after Netanyahu shook Yasser Arafat's hand, these images from his own recent political past—now deployed, disconcertingly, against him—had been relegated to the nation's ideological fringe.

The premier had vouchsafed Arafat as a legitimate partner in peace, and the mainstream of his party backed him firmly, if unhappily, against dissidents who said he had made a historic mistake.

"Don't preach to me," Netanyahu said in his central committee speech, addressing critics in his own Cabinet. "There is no one who worries more about the land of Israel than I do. There is no one who worries more about Jerusalem than I do. There is no one who worries more about security than I do. You know me."

Netanyahu softened the ideological blow by redoubling his commitment to Jewish settlement in the occupied West Bank. In an executive order he did not announce but made known to settlement leaders Thursday, Netanyahu directed the Finance Ministry to permit the sale of 3,000 West Bank apartments built by the last Likud government but "frozen" since 1992 under prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres.

David Bar Ilan, Netanyahu's director of communications and policy planning, said most Likud supporters would see the Arafat meeting as no more than "a necessary homage" to the peace process as long as Netanyahu moved practically to "strengthen the communities of West Bank, the Golan and Gaza."

Leaders of the Yesha Council, the umbrella group of settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, emerged from an emergency meeting Wednesday night with the declaration that they would not wait for Netanyahu's go-ahead on construction.

"Though we realize the prime minister does have our same ideals, he's really gotten kind of sidetracked because of the pressures both internally and externally, so we've decided to actively continue building without waiting for the government, and let the government catch up with us," said spokeswoman Yehudit Tayar.

Shaul Yaalon, a member of parliament from the National Religious Party, one of Netanyahu's crucial coalition partners, said "our condition for being a part of the coalition and the government" is that Netanyahu "balance" the Arafat handshake with renewed settlement throughout the West Bank "but especially in the Jewish area of Hebron."

But it was his own Likud Party, not the settlers or his coalition partners, who presented Netanyahu with the day's crucial political test. In an interview with Israel Television before the Likud's central committee meeting in Tel Aviv, Netanyahu laid down a challenge to dissidents in his Cabinet.

Asked if he was prepared to fire rebels, Netanyahu replied: "If necessary, yes."

Though the central committee did not cast a vote, Netanyahu plainly carried the hall Thursday night. Even critics like Michael Yanai, a 38-year-old Hasidic Jew who said it was "a crime against the people of Israel" for Netanyahu to "meet with a man who has murdered Jews," acknowledged that "a majority of the people here don't agree with me."

Asher Arnan, a Haifa University expert on public opinion, said that as a "party in administration and not in an immediate election campaign, the Likud had been strengthened by Netanyahu's move."

Fans obsessed over actresses who portray ideal man in Japan

By Hilary E. MacGregor
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

TOKYO—It's a sweltering Wednesday morning outside a theater in the posh Ginza district. Hundreds of women line the sidewalk holding flowers, cameras and fan letters.

A short-haired woman in a baseball cap and sunglasses alights from a cab and cuts through the crowd. Instantly, flash, video cameras roll and fans scurry behind her. Schoolgirls, housewives and grandmothers swoon.

"Oh, she's so handsome," sighs one elderly woman, clutching her handkerchief.

The object of all the sensation is Fubuki Takane, the newest star of the visiting Takarazuka Revue. Founded in 1914 in a small town in western Japan, the revue is the country's oldest—and only surviving—female musical-theater troupe. Its shows are a glitzy blend of Liberace, Radio City, Vegas and Broadway, with women playing both male and female roles.

The suave "otoko-yaku," or women playing men, with their shiny pompadours, huge painted eyes and perfectly painted lips, are the Takarazuka trademark—a romantic female ideal of the perfect man. In the troupe's sentimental musicals, otoko-yaku treat their women as real men rarely do in Japan: They woo them, tango with them and cradle them in their arms as they sing in manly baritone of their undying love.

Even more spectacular, perhaps, than the 370 women of the revue are the fans—an audience averaging 2.5 million a year, 95 percent female. The Takarazukas, as the performers are known, have charmed generations.

The obsessed fans often travel from distant provinces to the two revue theaters—in Tokyo and in Takarazuka, about 10 miles north of Osaka—to see shows dozens of times. They wait for hours before and after a performance so they

can fawn over the stars.

Some love the androgynous exoticism of the otoko-yaku; others long for real men who are just as romantic. "We think this is the most beautiful thing in the world," gushes Tomomi Ohashi, a 25-year-old office worker, outside the theater in Takarazuka. She awoke at 6 a.m. and traveled two hours by train from Nagoya to greet her favorite star before morning rehearsal—the ninth time in one month.

The otoko-yaku learn their craft at the Takarazuka Music School. In its immaculate entrance hall hangs a plaque with the school motto: "Modesty, purity and grace."

Upstairs in his spartan office, Principal Yoshiki Terai, a former hotel manager, articulates the school's philosophy.

"Japan is changing. But the fact remains that the most important thing for a woman is to be a good wife and a wise mother," he says. "That is the purpose of a girls' school, and that is the purpose of Takarazuka."

The administration, staffed almost completely by men, notes with pride that Takarazuka women are considered prize catches, otoko-yaku the best catches of all. (Women must quit if they marry.)

Entrance to the Takarazuka school is highly competitive—only 40 women out of about 1,600 applicants are accepted each spring.

The students take lessons in tap-dancing, ballet, voice and traditional Japanese dancing, as well as in the tea ceremony. They are subjected to a grueling schedule that, for the first year, begins at 6 a.m. daily with two hours of cleaning. Part of the drill is using tape to pick up dust from every square inch of the school's three floors.

Girls and women enter the program when they are between 16 and 20 years old. In the first year, they decide whether they want to be "mumuse-yaku," playing the far less popular female parts, or otoko-yaku. Not everyone can play the coveted otoko-yaku roles; one must be tall. And only a handful of the otoko-

yaku will go on to become top stars.

After the first year, separate training begins. The hair of the otoko-yaku is short, and they begin learning to walk and talk like men. Those who will play women learn other skills, such as singing in exaggerated sopranos.

After two years, the women graduate to the theater, beginning their climb through the ranks. The stars' ages are kept secret. Most Takarazukas retire after about 10 years—in their middle to late 20s. Otoko-yaku reach the top after 11 to 14 years and then dazzle their fans for three to five more years, depending on their popularity. They often retire by their early 30s.

Shinji Ueda, Takarazuka Revue Co. president and director, was unwilling to disclose his actresses' salaries but says even top stars make less than the average Japanese white-collar worker. "Takarazuka does everything for them. They don't need much money," he says.

The payoff comes later for those who decide to stay in show business. Former Takarazuka stars are everywhere here—in ads, on television, even in parliament.

Takarazuka is in the business of selling dreams, says Ueda, who also was scriptwriter for its two biggest hits, "The Rise of Versailles" and "Gone With the Wind."

"For the fans, Takarazuka is like a drug," he says. "It helps them escape from reality. Men don't treat women like that. ... This is how women want to be loved."

Ueda attributes Takarazuka's popularity to the inequality of the sexes, women's dissatisfaction with Japanese men and the restrictions placed on women in Japanese society. "Japanese men just go to work, and come home late drunk. They never say, 'Let's have dinner, just the two of us.' ... Japanese men are the worst," he says.

Ueda explains that many women love the shows because when they see other women on stage portraying men, they say to themselves: "I could do that!" And

they do. "I could ride a horse, run a company—and it would feel so good to have that power."

On the contrary, men today see Takarazuka as a place where they can get worked up about. Most have never seen a show and are even curious.

Otoko-yaku speak earnestly of their study of male manners, and their desire to please their fans is palpable. Jun Shibuki, an otoko-yaku, sitting with her lithe dancer's legs apart, explains in the cadence of male Japanese speech her struggle to behave like a man.

She says lower her voice was the biggest challenge. "First, no sound would come out. Now it sounds like an old man."

Ueda says in the 1940s and 1950s, the women watched big Hollywood stars such as Tyrone Power and Clark Gable to learn to walk, talk, sit and even smoke.

Shibuki is playing a character in an upcoming show and says she has been watching the 1987 movie "The Untouchables," starring Kevin Costner and Sean Connery.

Shibuki has been with Takarazuka for 11 years and says behaving like a man comes naturally. Many of the women act the same way offstage.

Mitsue Hana is the No. 2 otoko-yaku in the Flower Troupe, one of the troupe's four divisions (the others are Moon, Snow and Star). She is starring in the adaptation of the Broadway musical "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying."

She says she studies men on trains and buses: "When I see a man, somehow that leaves an impression—I walk with a wide stride, sit like a man, even my thinking is like a man. But we aren't men. We are women being men. We have a sexiness that men don't have."

Hana says the life of an otoko-yaku is full of privileges usually granted only to men. Fans cater to the stars' every whim, cooking meals, doing their cleaning and sending gifts that range from box lunches to jewelry.



Performing men's role is becoming the new favorite for women in Japan

Every day, thousands of fans make a pilgrimage to the town of Takarazuka to pay tribute to their favorite otoko-yaku. No one knows for sure how many fans there are, but a Takarazuka spokesman says there are more than 300 fan clubs. Tomonaka, the official fan club, lists 10,000 members.

According to a recent book by the Takarazuka Research Club, an assembly of journalists and fans, the average fan spends \$2,000 to \$2,500 a year to attend 20 performances and buy Takarazuka-related videos, magazines, calendars and other products. In 1994, revenues from videos alone totaled \$150 million.

Tickets cost \$35 to \$75. The theater's revenues are not announced separately from those of Hankyu Corp., but a Takarazuka spokesman says audiences have grown by 80 percent in the past 15 years. Still, he says, the troupe is in the red, because each performance employs close to 300 people.

On one Saturday, fans stood in the rain in Takarazuka outside the troupe's home theater, waiting to greet the stars before a

rehearsal of "How to Succeed." A deep respect for the stars governs the crowd's behavior. There are no paparazzi; no fan reaches out to touch her favorite actress.

During the intermission of the afternoon show, Tsuji Yoko, 40, says she plans to see the show 50 times during its six-week run. The wealthy homemaker says she comes to escape reality.

Office worker Ishihara Shizuo, 34, will see the show and attend a tea party, where she will pay \$50 for cake, tea and 30 seconds to speak with her favorite star. "I wanted to be born a boy," she says.

Ohashi, the office worker who took the train, says when she watches love scenes between men and women in movies, she doesn't feel anything much. But Takarazuka drives her wild. "Seeing the love scenes, I get embarrassed," says Ohashi. "But it's so romantic."

Until things in Japan really change, says Ueda, Takarazuka has a corner on the dream market: "If the number of fans drops, we will know women are happier, their home lives are getting better."

Nike factory in Indonesia Sweatshop or way out of poverty?

By Keith B. Richburg and Anne Swanson
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

THE YOUNG women are the daughters of rural farmers, village schoolteachers or shop clerks. Now they live together in the Indonesian factory town of Serang, a dozen to a dormitory room, sleeping on bunk beds.

They spend most of their time in a nearby Taiwanese-owned factory, where they are paid \$2.28 a day to cut the soles, sew the seams and run the machines that make the most popular—and controversial—athletic shoe in the world: Nike. And most of them say they like it.

Factories such as the one in Serang, which employs 18,000 Indonesians, in recent months have come to symbolize the role of American companies in the developing world. A number of critics, some funded by organized labor in the United States and others not, have spotlighted what they say are abuses of local pay and labor standards, and much press attention has followed.

The critics have singled out Nike, with its long history of manufacturing in Asia, its \$140 shoes and its stable of such athletic superstars as Michael Jordan on the payroll.

Some in the United States deem Nike factories in Indonesia "sweatshops," cheap labor mills where American companies can exploit underpaid workers to maximize profits back home. But Nike, and at least some of the overseas workers who make its shoes, say American investment in such countries as Indonesia has placed those countries on the road to prosperity.

It is one of those yes-you-do, no-I-don't debates where the truth is difficult to ascertain not only in the United States but in Serang, a gritty industrial center 50 miles west of Indonesia's capital, Jakarta. What is clear is that Indonesia is booming and poverty is falling, relative to its impoverished past, and much of the boom has come since American and other companies began investing there a decade or so ago. Many of the 120,000 Indonesian workers who produce Nike shoes, most of whom come from impoverished rural backgrounds, say factories like Serang provide a chance not only to earn but to save money and to send the extra cash back to families.

"Thanks to God, it's enough money for me," said one

young woman, a teacher's daughter, who has been working for three years. She is 23 now, comes from central Java and helps care for her two siblings. She said she is able to save about three-quarters of her income, which she sends back to the family.

"I came here one year ago from central Java," said a girl who at 17 was the youngest interviewed. "I'm making more money than my father makes." She also said she saves about 75 percent of what she makes and sends the savings back to her family on the farm, to help care for 5-and 10-year-old brothers. The women, who spoke to a reporter in the presence of fac-



Smiling in the face of poverty!

factory managers, did not give their names.

Ninety percent of the workers in Serang are women, most about 19 or 20 years old. At least 10,000 live at the factory compound, where they are given three meals each day in a huge hangar-like cafeteria. There is a television set inside, and a stage is set up outside for parties and sing-alongs. There is a mosque, a chapel and a convenience store.

But not all the workers who make Nike shoes in Indonesia are happy. An Indonesian woman named Sadi Sah who said she and 23 other workers had been fired from a Nike-producing factory for asking to be paid the minimum wage toured the United States this summer under the auspices of anti-Nike groups, holding news conferences and leading demonstrations. Nike says she and others were fired after they went on strike over wages and damaged the factory so extensively that three days of production were lost. The factory then was owned by South Koreans. Now it is in local

hands and the case is before Indonesia's supreme court.

Indonesia, for a variety of reasons, has generated more controversy for Nike than have other foreign producers. Jeff Ballinger, essentially a one-man organization called Press for Change, has dogged Nike's performance in Indonesia for eight years and probably is the leading critic of the shoe giant's overseas operations. He issues fat reports that say Nike-producing Asian factories fail to pay the Indonesian minimum wage and improperly dismiss or harass workers, even slap them.

"I'm not saying (American investment) won't in the long run lead to better conditions

runners have been manufactured in Asia since the company's beginnings in 1964. Nike does not own these factories; it works in partnership with local owners or with Taiwanese or Korean owners.

The young women at the Serang plant, owned by the Taiwanese firm Pou Chen, earn a base pay of 5,200 Indonesian rupiahs each day, which is the legal minimum wage. That comes to about \$2.28 a day. In Indonesia, less than half of the working population earns the minimum wage, since about half of all adults here are in farming, and the typical farmer would make only about 2,000 rupiahs each day. So receiving the minimum wage automatically puts these workers among higher-paid Indonesians.

The dormitory rooms at the Serang factory are small, but also airy. No one is forced to live in them; most choose to do so to save money. The factories are relatively clean, the ceilings are high, and open side windows in most of them provide ventilation. In areas where there is more dust or odors, surgical masks are provided. Many of the women prefer to work barefoot or in sandals, because that is the Indonesian custom in the tropically hot country—not because they are forced to go barefoot or have no shoes to wear. Normal working hours are 40 hours each week, seven hours Monday through Friday and a half-day on Saturday. Lunchtime is one hour.

Nike officials say not only that the company has improved working conditions in Indonesia, as was done earlier in Japan and Taiwan, but that the country is on a road traveled by Britain and the United States in the last century.

Per capita income in Indonesia has more than tripled in the last 20 years. The decline in poverty has been one of the most dramatic in recent years, according to the World Bank. 15 percent of the population lived at the lowest level of poverty early this decade, down from 29 percent 10 years before.

Critics are unimpressed. "It's not possible to see how these workers feel just looking at the numbers," Ballinger said. "It's a bigger picture than 'Is the economy getting better?' and 'Are rural people climbing out of poverty?'" Swanson reported from Beaverton, Ore., and Richburg from Serang, Indonesia. ■

Video Games In decathlete, the skill is all in the thumb

By Aaron Curtiss
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

WITH ATLANTA'S Olympic flame now but a fond glow in our memories, those aching for a taste of the games need reach only as far as their Sega Saturn joy pad.

Decathlete from Sega Sports gets a gold for bringing the technical feel of the Olympics' most famous macho event to 32-bit game consoles, but gets disqualified when it comes to capturing the action of the 10-event competition.

With dazzling graphics and some awesome character motion, Decathlete is one of the best-looking sports games around for console machines. Changing camera angles and a precise attention to detail definitely make it one of the best track and field games. But that's not saying all that

much. My main beef with Decathlete is the same one I have with all the track and field games in which repetitive stress injury is all but guaranteed. The only way to excel at these games is to bang the C button over and over and over—for almost four minutes in the case of the 1,500-meter dash.

I end up with a wrist and forearm that hurt like crazy, and all I get for my trouble is a goofy animation of some polygonal palooka either punching the air in victory or holding his head in defeat.

And although I hate to sound like a grumpy old man, what's the point of making some animated character run around a track on your TV screen when you could be out doing the same thing? It's not like most other sports games in which players get to swap star players or plot strategies.

Victory here comes not to the cunning of mind, but to the spry of thumb. I give Decathlete—and the rest of the games in

this genre—a thumbs down.

Imagine a game that stars a cute marsupial and his elephant chum. Keep imagining that the key to success is cooperation and friendliness and that the various levels are populated by a host of cutesy foils.

Sounds awful, I know. Where are the big guns? The menacing sneers? The finishing moves?

That's what I asked when I popped Marsupilami into my Sega Genesis and watched a world too cute for its own good unfold on my screen. Then I got sucker punched and ended up playing the game for the better part of a weekend.

As dorky as it sounds, Marsupilami is a heck of a lot of fun. The goal is to help your pachyderm pal Bonelli escape from the circus. That's easier said than done, though, because Bonelli can't do much on his own and he's always on your tail. Marsupilami's most effective tool and weapon is his overly long tail, which can transform into stairs, a mouse, a shield or a parachute. Trust me, it's pretty cool.

Although it looks like a kid's title, Marsupilami offers a challenge to players who like side-scrollers where higher reasoning is as critical as brain stem reflexes. ■

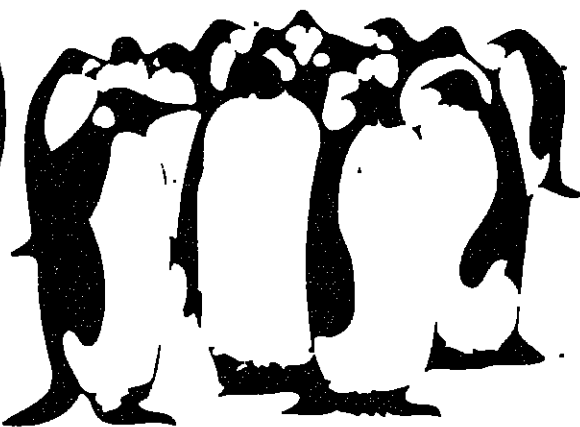
Arnie goes to London

● The world famous Hollywood superstar Arnold Schwarzenegger or Arnie as dubbed by his fans is seen in London following the premier of his film Eraser. True to tradition, Schwarzenegger's Eraser is an action-packed adventure using the latest techniques in movie technology.

The film has already made a profit of \$100 million. The showing of the movie in one of the London suburbs attracted 5000 movie-goers who screamed their heads off to welcome Arnie.



AROUND TOWN



Ammanites express displeasure with fountain

Many Ammanites are unhappy with the Greater Amman Municipality's decision to put up a water fountain at the First Circle in Jarrah Amman. The fountain, which was moved from a previous position near the Third Circle, has raised questions about the municipality's right to "beautify" Amman without first consulting its inhabitants. Those who object to the fountain project agree that it is ugly and an "insult" to the people who live in that neighborhood.



(Photo by Fuad Jboor)

Ammar Khammash

Witnessing turn of the century

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

In his photography exhibition at Darat al Funun, Ammar Khammash portrays the timelessness of old villages which have faded well to a bygone age to witness the advent of another. They "freeze time and set off an architectural structure decided by people under the influence of natural elements," Khammash said.

Khammash's choice of the villages stems from his belief that human development is an

accumulative process. He told *The Star* that modern architecture must be built on the past. He tried to document the architectural elements of the past. When I started taking these photos in 1985, I was seeking to portray the diversity of villages along the land that split Jordan's desert from the valley. Those areas were like a wall over which several villages spread.

The "architectural decision," as Khammash sees it, must be based on natural elements. Nature is seen as "the largest

box which contains smaller ones namely, the landscape, courtyard, house, the interior of the house and even clothes." All these layers made the architectural style an integral process in which each aspect has a specific contribution. "The final pattern results in culture of which architecture is a main part."

Having studied ethnology, anthropology and archaeology at Yarmouk University and in the US, Khammash focuses on the impact of nature on people's choice of their houses. Drawing on the relationship between landscape and man conveys much of the architectural style of the houses. "I did not try to detect similarities between the villages but I looked for as much variety as I could. Villages of the south and the north which are situated in the same climatic atmosphere and are of the same altitude had identical architectural features."

Asked if religious beliefs affect people's architectural choice, Khammash said that it is proved that religion has nothing to do with that. In a village near Karak called Humoud, which is strictly Christian,

there was no influence of religion as such. "It is the landscape and what material it offers that govern the choice of people in their houses."

Khammash provides a detailed picture of how the interiors of the houses are like. In villages like Tebnah, Samad and Soumia, the interior design reflects the simplicity of farmers who decorate their houses with natural materials.

This is a depiction of the intimate relation between the dwellers and their houses and how nature could be viewed as the designer. "It is a kind of a dialogue between the people and their shelters which provide protection," Khammash said. All these elements form one structure and houses are seen as "musical instruments that can by no means play by themselves."

According to Khammash, in the Humoud village, the wheat production and the storage techniques contributed to the formation of the interior design of the house. Wheat, which is considered by the peasant as a staple foodstuff, has an integral place inside the house. The stored wheat became later on a part of the house decoration and its overall structure. "Nowadays people use technology to decorate their houses. In the past, nature had the upper hand," he



Samad village

said. Asked if such houses can be preserved by turning them into museums, Khammash said that museums are dead places and considered as "cemeteries of the past."

But photography is a good way of documenting heritage. "The future generations will have the opportunity to view their ancestors' production with regard to their architectural techniques. We can make what can be called a 'genetic bank of the past' that chronicles all the previously mentioned elements

that altogether produced such houses."

What makes the exhibition more than a documentation of the past is the touch of the artist when taking such photos. It was just like building these houses again by choosing the right time and angle of shooting. This is in addition to the architect's experience in the different ways of building that made him concentrate on certain details which the ordinary viewer can not guess its significance.

The exhibition lasts till 10 October within the Summer '96 activities at the Darat. ■



The interior of a house at Humoud village showing a storage technique

Pianist appeals to the multitude

By Christian Doumit
Special to The Star

It is the conviction of this writer that piano recitals dedicated to a single composer are taxing on both performer and listener even though the latter may not admit it or perhaps is not aware of it. A well selected mixed program as was presented last Sunday evening by Zeina Asfour—is far more attractive and challenging as it forces all parties to change wavelengths, as it were, of transmitter and receiver thus renewing attention.

A Debussy evening starts with enchantment and ends with enervation; the pastel shades grow too evanescent. Schuman delights for quite sometime by his rhythmic patterns can become trying in their rigidity. And what of Chopin, the very poet of the piano, who is altogether free

from the orchestral qualities that are frequent in the other romantics and whose music virtuosos neither exude nor exhibition but lyrical expression—a man who lived his whole life in the turmoil of society, outwardly spoiled by good fortune but reality like many of his contemporaries, a virtuoso of suffering. Chopin composed the confessions and if the Nocturnes are the dreams of his solitude he celebrated his highest triumphs in the sparkling Etudes and other works in which the national Slavic element came strongly to the fore—whence it passed into the mainstream of European music. The Polish blood throbs with particular vigor in his warlike Polonaises but always warm and gentle heart. (Audiences may be of a



different mind but there were times when I had had enough of Chopin in one sitting). Asfour gave a private piano recital at the newly-refurbished Amman Bookshop last Sunday

devoted to Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Paganini, and Ravel. Her Program was well selected and diversified enough to include Bach's preludes and Fugues in C Minor and C Sharp major. Beethoven's Sonata "The Tempest", Op 31#1, Chopin's Etude #4 and Ravel's Jeux d'Eau.

The range of expression this young pianist possesses—from the most delicate impressionistic water colors of Ravel to Bach's great variations built on contrasting effects to Beethoven's raging explosion of power is extraordinary. And just as Beethoven felt the need to communicate his ideas to the masses and make music a factor in the cultural life of humanity, there was something in Asfour's performance and the ambiance of Amman Bookshop that transcended the small circle of privileged few attending the recital and wanted to appeal to the multitude. ■

Culture promoted at Amman bookshop

BOOKSHOPS ARE basic to the cultural scene of any country. They are places where people uncover new intellectual horizons and know more about the world.

Jordan has been working in the past few years to turn Amman into "the capital of Arab culture". One can notice the growing number of bookshops in Amman destined by both the intellectual and the average person.

But the kind of bookshops which provide a wide variety of books are still few. The Amman Bookshop in Jabal Amman is one of the rare bookshops in the kingdom where readers from all walks of life can find a diverse kind of books. These range from philosophy and religion to literature and politics. This is in addition to a special corner for children books, Arabic, English and

translated books are available.

To create a unique atmosphere, the Amman Bookshop introduced a small coffee section. People are invited to review the latest books on the shelves, drink coffee and then obtain books at reasonable costs. The new atmosphere makes the shop more than a place to buy books. People get together to talk about different cultural concerns. The bookshop held a musical recital by the pianist Zeina Asfour last Sunday. It was attended by a number of publishers, bookshop owners and people interested in culture.

Mr Usama Shi'shaa, the director of the Amman bookshop said that people will have the opportunity "to come and review the latest books and know what is going on in the world." ■

US jazz ambassadors perform in Amman

By Rick Marshall

TWO OF the most accomplished young jazz musicians in the United States—James Linahon and Thomas Hynes—are bringing their music and enthusiasm to Amman as part of the US Information Agency's Jazz Ambassadors program.

The two musicians arrived in Jordan 8 September to begin a series of performances, workshops and jazz sessions with local musicians on a six-week tour that will take them to Amman, Damascus, Cairo and other stops in East Africa. The two performed yesterday at Darat Al Funun within the Summer '96 activities.

Linahon is a trumpet and flugelhorn player and a composer of considerable reputation. He has played with such greats as Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett and Sarah Vaughn and recorded several CDs on his own. In addition, he is the director of jazz studies at Fullerton College in California and works closely with several television and film companies in the Los Angeles area producing sound tracks. His work as a performer and producer has earned him numerous Grammy and Downbeat awards.

Hynes, who teaches with Linahon at Fullerton, is a guitarist who is equally at home performing live or in the recording studio. He has recorded numerous television, radio and film programs including work for Disney and 20th Century Fox. He has played with some of the best up-and-coming jazz artists in the country and recorded his own contemporary jazz CD, "The Sun Shop," which features his own compositions.

Linahon and Hynes focus on the great masters of American jazz—Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Charlie Parker, Rogers and Hart, George Gershwin, Thelonious Monk, and Miles Davis. But to do such music justice, the two draw upon the many streams which have influenced jazz over the past century—blues, swing, big band, bebop.

"Jazz is a universal language," Linahon says. "I'm really looking forward to meeting people and sharing a lot of good music together."

"Jazz musicians draw on many cultures," Hynes adds. "We're very curious and open to sounds from other cultures. I am very interested in the textures of Arab music. There are ideas there which we can incorporate into our work." The two are equally pleased to be able to represent the United States as part of the Jazz Ambassadors program.

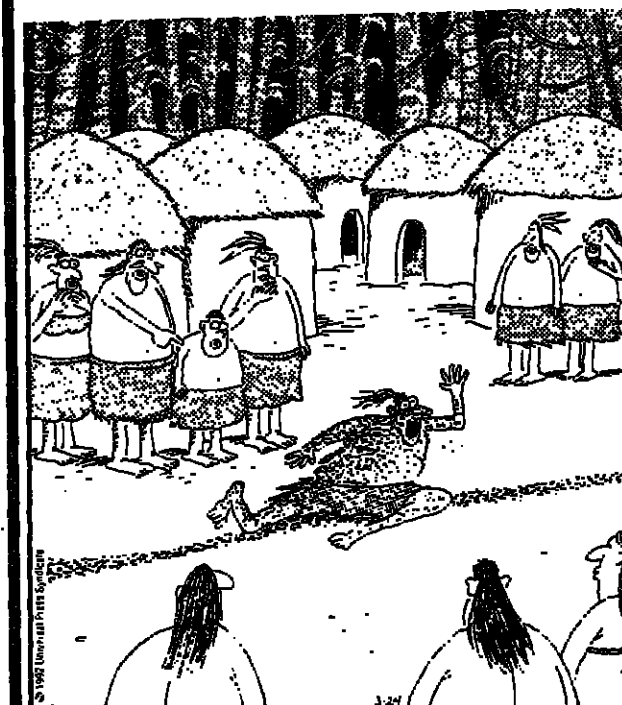
USIA

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Albums to avoid



Crossing the village, Mowaka is overpowered by army ants. (Later, bystanders were all quoted as saying they were horrified, but "didn't want to get involved.")



"It's 'Them', gentlemen."



"Won't talk, huh? ... Frankie! Hand me that scalar."

Gifted student with a 'Horrible Dream'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gifted students in Jordan should be encouraged at all levels. *The Star* devotes this space for a short story written by Laris Omoush, a 16 year-old tenth-grader from Mafrak. She won the first prize of the Mafrak Education Directorate for her short story titled *Horrible Dream*.

Once upon a time there was a little girl called Hadeel. Hadeel was an active lovely girl, but she used to lie a lot about everything. Some of her friends loved her and tried to believe what she said sometimes. Some other times her friends tried to advise her; they told her that she shouldn't make any lies because this is not good for her.

One day, rain was falling from the sky in buckets but Hadeel wanted to play out in the park with her friends. After two hours, Hadeel came back. She caught a cold because she didn't listen to her mother.

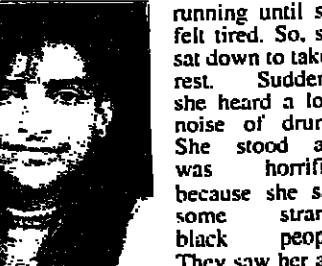
Hadeel had a stay in bed her a few days. Her mother brought her a glass of lemon. Hadeel drank the lemon and went to sleep.

Suddenly, she found herself with her friends and the teacher in the school bus. She remembered that the teacher said they would go on a journey to a cave to discover it.

They reached the cave and began to get off the bus. The teacher led the students to the cave and she began to talk about caves.

Hadeel and her friends entered the cave with the teacher. The teacher told them to be careful and to walk slowly.

Hadeel was very bored and she went away from the group. Then she found a hole, at the end of the cave. She looked through the hole and she saw a beautiful big garden. It was full of colorful flowers and trees that had plenty of fruit. Hadeel was very hungry so she ate from those fruits. After that she began to walk between the trees and picked many flowers. Hadeel kept on walking and



Omoush

leader. Hadeel was surprised of the leader's beauty and her wonderful dress. Luckily, the leader was very kind and she liked children. Hadeel was afraid but the leader smiled at her and said "Hello Hadeel. I will not hurt you don't be afraid of me. I like truthful children like you. And so I'm going to give you a beautiful dress like mine."

Hadeel was very happy with the dress. She looked at herself in the mirror and smiled because she saw herself like a princess. After that, Hadeel thanked the kind leader and went back to the group.

The students asked Hadeel, "where did you go? And where did you get this wonderful dress from?" Hadeel said "My uncle brought it from France."

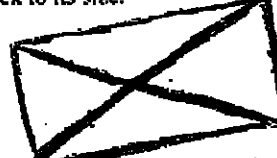
Suddenly Hadeel was crying because the dress was becoming smaller and smaller on her. The dress was pressing on her body very hard. Then Hadeel told the truth and the dress got back to its size.

Then Hadeel woke up and began to cry "Mum, Mum, Mum!" Her mother came very quickly. Hadeel told her mother everything about the dream and the story of that magic dress. Her mother smiled and asked her "What can you learn from this dream, Hadeel?"

Hadeel answered the question and promised her mother to be a good girl and said, "I will not lie anymore. I promise you Mum!"

Hadeel's mother told her that she bought her a beautiful dress because of her birthday. Hadeel saw the dress, and she was surprised because it looked exactly the same as the magic dress in her dream. Then Hadeel went out from the room quickly and shouted: "I don't want this dress. I don't need it..." Her mother laughed at her and followed her to the garden. ■

The END



AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Summer '96, at Darat al Funun, continues till 10 October.
■ Tapis Volant, at The French Cultural Centre, continues from 8 till 24 September.
■ Wrought Iron Exhibition, by Salim Bandak at Kan Zaman, ends today.

Films

■ Moliere, at The French Cultural Centre, 17 September, at 6:00 pm.
■ Farid Belkacem, at Darat

at Funun, 12 September, at 6:00 pm.

■ Danger Mouse, at The British Council, 17 September, at 5:00 pm.
■ How Green Was My Valley, at The British Council, 18 September, at 7:00 pm.

Lectures

■ Qasr Amra (Amra palace), by princess Wijdan Ali at Darat al Funun, 15 September at 7:00 pm.

SEPTEMBER
R SIDE
by GARY LARSON

SEPTEMBER 1996

A special section offering
fresh perspectives on
global issues prepared for
The Star

THE WORLD PAPER

PRINTED IN FIVE LANGUAGES
ON FIVE CONTINENTS



APPEARING IN: AMMAN • BANGKOK • BEIJING • BOGOTA • BOMBAY • BOSTON • CAIRO • CARACAS • HONG KONG • JAKARTA • KARACHI • KUALA LUMPUR • LIMA • MANILA • MEXICO CITY • MOSCOW • PANAMA CITY • QUITO • SAN JOSE • TAIPEI • TOKYO

Books get flat tire on the information superhighway

Pulp fiction travels best

For centuries books have been the main vehicle for carrying ideas and information across borders, both cultural and geographic. Today, trade and information flow more freely than ever, but the same is not true of books. Cultural chauvinism, high prices and changing tastes among the young conspire against foreign writers and their ideas

By Gabriel Pasquini

FOREIGN AUTHORS, go home: Argentinians don't read your books. If you are not Gabriel García Márquez, Isabel Allende or Laura Esquivel, forget it. There's not enough space for you on the bookshelf.

Noticia de un secuestro (A Report of a Kidnapping), García Márquez's new book, heads the fiction column in the latest list of best sellers. Works about Latin American habits and contradictions and the dialogues between two of Argentina's finest writers, Jorge Luis Borges and Ernesto Sábato, are among the top non-fiction best sellers.

This preference for Latin American and local literature, added to an economic depression and the presence of a younger generation that does not read at all, conspires against foreign writers, despite cultural globalization. The few foreigners who do succeed appeal either to an intellectual elite or, like James Redfield, to the lowest end of the market.

Loving Latin America

"If there was any literature boom in the past few years, it was the boom of Latin American authors," said Claudio Zeiger, a book critic and literary journalist.

Laura Esquivel's *Like Water for Chocolate* and the movie based on it

triggered the phenomenon. The Chilean Isabel Allende and the Mexican Angeles Mastretta are the biggest beneficiaries of the trend. In addition to these two, the works of Pablo Neruda, Mario Vargas Llosa, Julio Cortázar, Mario Benedetti, Juan Carlos Onetti, Jorge Amado, Osvaldo Soriano and Ernesto Sábato are constantly asked for in bookstores and kiosks.

"There is place for any Latin American book, especially contemporary authors and Argentinians," Pedro Pascual and Carlos Dorado, editors with

Planeta, told the newspaper *Página 12*.

The classics deserve a special chapter: García Márquez's book about Colombian kidnappers and drug-traffickers sold 140,000 copies in two months. He's one of very few writers—Latin American or otherwise—who could make such a big impact on the tiny, slow-moving Argentinean book market. As a senior editor at Editorial Planeta, the biggest publishing house in the country, put it, "a 10,000 copy sale is a great success."

The other main conspirator against foreign literature is the economic recession. After the Mexican peso crisis

of 1994, book sales went down 30 percent. In 1995 there was an 8.6 percent fall in the printing of books, compared to the previous year. Five publishing companies—out of the total 4,269 registered with the Cámara del Libro (Chamber of the Book)—share 75 percent of the sales.

During the last Book Fair in Buenos Aires, an annual 20-day event where one million people gathered last April, the only books that sold well were those that didn't cost much. Almost no one spent more than US\$30 on a single book.

But it's not only the lack of money; it is also what people care about, and for the younger generation that does not include books. A special marketing survey done by Planeta showed that young people don't read at all. The typical reader is over 30 years of age.

One book a year

"Young people don't buy books and don't have a reading habit," was one of the research's conclusions. Children under 14 years of age read, if anything,

terror stories, the study showed.

From the average two books a year that an Argentine High School student (from 12 to 17 years of age) read in the 1970s, the statistic went down to 0.7 books a year in 1995, according to a research done by the National Ministry of Education, the Education Department of Buenos Aires City and a publisher association. In the US, the average is 10.3, in Spain 6.5, and in Peru, 3. Almost 70 percent of all high school students cannot interpret a news story

and more than 50 percent don't know how to use the punctuation signals.

As a sign of the times, bookstores are not the place where most books are being sold in Argentina. Supermarkets, kiosks and reader associations are becoming the main retail outlets. According to the same study by Planeta, those spots are responsible for 50 percent of the total sales. Last year, 120,000 books were sold in supermarkets alone.

► PULP FICTION PAGE 2

American writers are revered—if they write thrillers

Filipino readers want to escape

By Jose Dalisay Jr.

ENGLISH 198: *Power and Privilege* in Sidney Sheldon
ENGLISH 44: *A Survey Course in the American Techno-Thriller—Clancy, Crichton and imitators*
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 156: *The Bodice Ripper as a Cross-Cultural Phenomenon*

These subjects aren't taught—at least, not yet—in Filipino universities,

but if they were, many Filipinos would ace the course, given their current reading preferences.

Filipinos love and treasure foreign authors more than their own. If and when they read at all, however, the authors aren't likely to be Gabriel García Márquez, A. S. Byatt, or Kenzaburo Oe.

In part, the problem lies in the fact that fewer and fewer Filipinos seem to

be reading books (excepting popular romance novels, which are enjoying a boomlet of sorts). The local publishing industry is getting livelier each year—hundreds of small new titles come out in the annual September Book Fair—but the general readership for books remains pitifully small in this country of more than 65 million. Typically, a new local novel in English will have an initial print run of 1,000 copies. If the au-

thor is lucky, it could sell out in a year. If he or she is even luckier, there will be another print run.

But it's not as if Filipinos don't want to read. They pride themselves on an adult literacy rate approaching 95 percent, and most Filipinos can speak and write English, the problematic legacy of 50 years of American colonial rule. Manila alone has about two dozen metropolitan dailies, most of them in English. But newspapers are one thing, and books another: books in the Philippines are terribly expensive, and cheaper forms of entertainment such as movies and videos are widely available. An imported best-selling paperback costs about US\$7; but you can see a movie, or rent a video, for no more than a dollar—a significant difference in a country where the average daily income stands at around \$6.30.

Not surprisingly, the books that do sell well among Filipinos are the cheap local romances. Written largely in the national language, these pulp editions cost little more than \$1 a copy. A brisk resale trade has emerged in these books, which are stacked in boxes and hawked by vendors along Manila's sidewalks just outside the metropolitan universities.

Still, if a work of fiction gets sold in one of the few national bookstore chains such as NBS or Goodwill, it will most likely be an American best seller by such popular worthies as Sidney Sheldon, Stephen King, Tom Clancy, Danielle Steel and Erich Segal.

An informal survey of about 60 undergraduate students at the University of the Philippines—the country's premier state university—starkly bears out these preferences. With enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism, most students voted for Sheldon and King as their top two choices, employing such back-cover hosannas as "unputdownable" to describe the works of their writing heroes. Giving what could be the strongest reason for the appeal of these authors, a student said that he liked Sheldon because, "you could almost feel as if you were really there—from the secluded convents of Spain to the high-class society of Boston." In other words, hurry for books which sell escapism which sells more books.

In the second rank came such other book-club familiars as Anne Rice, John Grisham, Judith McNaught, Michael Crichton and Robert Ludlum. Here and there, the more adventurous veered off in the direction of Margaret

Atwood, Ben Okri, Isabel Allende, and Amy Tan. And then, of course, there's García Márquez, whose work exercises a potent charm upon many Filipinos who stumble upon his work, and see in his Macondo the keys to the many strangenesses of contemporary Filipino society. (But the search for profundity can take its toll. One student boldly declared that he admired "Friedrich Nietzsche for his book, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.")

Even among Filipino authors themselves, García Márquez was a relatively late discovery. A stout tradition of writing in English is approaching its hundredth year, and has largely been influenced by the Anglo-American canon. James Joyce, William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway continue to be taught and admired in the universities, although Maya Angelou, Sandra Cisneros and even A. M. Homes have crept into the syllabus here and there.

A new generation of Filipino writers—more catholic in its tastes and more political in its commitments—has dropped John Updike & Co. for the likes of Pablo Neruda, Toni Morrison, Italo Calvino, David Leavitt, and Jayne Anne Phillips. Traveling authors and academics return with copies of their newest prize finds, continuously refreshing this list, and some Manila bookshops now take orders, at a hefty premium, for forwarding to their foreign suppliers.

What's surprising is that, despite all the talk about "postcoloniality" in the lecture halls, many if not most Filipino writers remain staunchly Western and First World-oriented, with few cultural or personal connections to the literature and writing communities of Southeast Asia, let alone Africa or Latin America.

In this sense, the "discovery" of García Márquez by local authors in the 1970s was liberating—at least until it spawned a slew of "magic-realist" soundalikes.

Foreign literary fashions still bear great influence on the Filipino reading and writing scene. But sometimes it all comes down to what's available in the bookstores. The recent importation and the widespread distribution of works by such relatively new authors as Kazuo Ishiguro, Timothy Mo, Amy Tan, and Jessica Hagedorn is bound to provoke fresh interest among literary academics in the Asian writer abroad.

It's a safe bet, however, that their students will be thumbing breathlessly through Sidney Sheldon's latest confection in the meanwhile, exam or no exam. ☐

JOSE DALISAY JR. IS A PLAYWRIGHT WHO TEACHES ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES.



The Asian writer abroad: Amy Tan intrigues the Filipino elite, but the country's reading public prefers Tom Clancy

A new interest in Israel Arab themes dominate Jordanian elite's book selections

By Marwan Asmar

THE CONCEPT of a reading public is hard to define. In Jordan there are readers, but there is no reading public—a concept that dominates the national character and psychology of other nations like Japan

for example. Intellectuals and authors in Jordan believe that people are more concerned with bread and butter issues than with the luxury of buying a book. "Books are too expensive to buy when one considers that the level of income is very low," says Abdullah Hamdan, chief editor of

Amman, the monthly cultural magazine.

Despite this there exists a strata of avid readers, the intellectual elite. Although small by comparison to other countries, these people have vigorous reading habits, reading anything and everything that they can lay their hands on.

Jordan's so-called reading elite are a disciplined lot. By and large, their book collections focus on politics and fiction and have a distinctly Arab flavor. Even when they do delve into the works of foreign writers, they are usually in pursuit of some insight in the Middle East.

The long-running Arab-Israeli con-

► ARAB THEMES PAGE 2

ims to avoid

owaka is overpowered by me.
were all quoted as saying they
didn't want to get involved?

em, gentlemen.

"Frankie! Hand me that scab"

al Funun, 12 September

6:15 pm

British Council, 17 September, 6:30 pm

How to Use the British Council

18 September, 7:00 pm

Lectures

Clear your mind

at Darul al-Funun, 18 September, 7:00 pm

Cultural arrogance and hard cash shape options for American reading public

Foreign writers get lost in translation

By Sadi Ranson

FOR YEARS, American literature has been translated worldwide, particularly in Europe. But the favor is not returned. A combination of cultural indifference and commercial imperatives effectively keeps many foreign writers out of the US market.

The total number of translations published in the United States each year is estimated at 1,800. This figure includes translations from all countries and includes business and school texts as well as literature. By contrast, Germany publishes 3,900 translations from the English language alone. In France, the total number of translations is estimated to be over 7,000.

In the US, publishing translations has become a ministry of sorts, and one that is relegated to the smaller publishing houses. The larger publishers are reluctant to take on the burden of seeking foreign work, publishing it, and then promoting and selling it to the American public.

By and large, the majority of books that are translated in the US are translated from French to English. France is perhaps the most committed, and certainly most organized, country when it comes to seeing that French culture is represented abroad. In New York, the Bureau de Livres Français (The French Book Office) represents approximately 25 publishers. The organization, which serves as a US representative for French work, publishes its own catalogue (in English) which is distributed to US publishers. It's much easier to secure the rights to publish a book this way than having to hunt down an author in a more remote country.

The French also have on their side the fact that French is a language that many editors speak, read or, at the very least, have readers who can read the text for them and give them an opinion.

Conversely, a work from China faces many problems. The publisher has to determine who to call in China (there is a Chinese Writer's Guild, but there

are the obvious difficulties with language and finding somebody with the authority to negotiate), and then find a good translator. More obscure languages—particularly one that is uncommon in the US—also costs more to have translated and, furthermore, is harder to translate well. With the romance languages, there are more translators to choose from. Also, while the countries are culturally different from our own, they are not quite as different as perhaps the Arab nations, who are probably the most underrepresented countries in terms of translation.

One company that has committed itself to bringing foreign works to US readers is Boston-based David R. Godine Publisher, a small independent press. In 1993, Godine launched a series devoted entirely to translated works. Baptized Verba Mundi—words

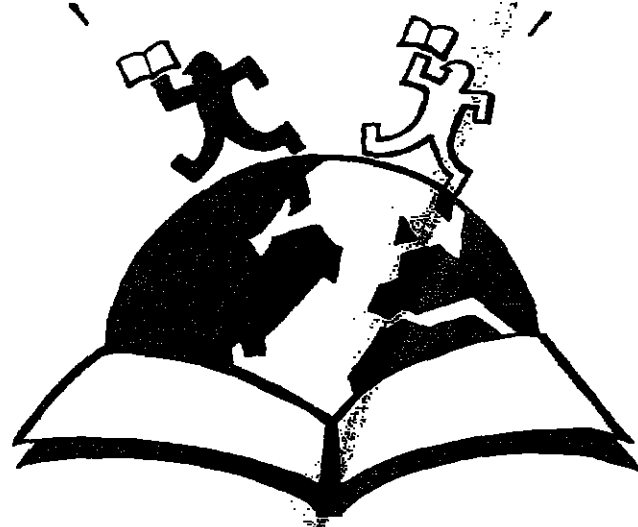
has just blended into American literature. So all we have really is Mexico and there aren't that many Mexican writers who have made it here. Whereas in Europe you are surrounded all the time; countries have several other countries

In the United States, publishing translations has become a ministry of sorts, and one that is relegated to the smaller publishing houses

bordering them. And I think because of European history that has been much more of an interpenetration of cultures. A place like Paris for example—or Berlin or Saint Petersburg—were major cultural centers for many years and they received an influx of people from many other cultures and were influenced by them. There is more of a tradition of accepting and being interested in what other cultures are up to.

The contrast is obvious in most European bookstores. There are various sections for foreign literature—one for English language, one for Spanish, and so on. In the US, translations are simply lumped in with other books. If it is a work of fiction, printed in paperback for the first time, the odds of the book getting any review attention are slim (unless it is a well known author). A reader looking for such a book can only come across it by chance, browsing through the stacks at the local bookstore. The books are placed spine-out cover—out.

Indeed, cultural arrogance remains entrenched in this country. "A lot of people do consider that American culture is the pre-eminent culture. A lot of people really are convinced that this is the culture that matters. And in a way, that attitude has been reinforced by the spread of American culture throughout the world," notes Polizzotti. "The thing is, they are much more interested in what we are doing than we are in what they are doing. An American (television) series, for example, will be all over Europe, and not only as a curiosity. Dallas was just as



of the world—the series mixes new authors with foreign classics such as *The Tartar Steppes* by Dino Buzzati, Isaac Babel's *The Lonely Years* and *Obscene Bird of Night* by José Donoso. According to Mark Polizzotti, the company's editorial director, for this series to flourish requires overcoming an isolationist streak.

"Geographically, we really are here," says Polizzotti. "On one hand we are bordered by Canada, which basically

of thought that stresses the socio-historical factors which influence the Arab man today.

A classic example is Munif, who wrote a trilogy in Arabic called the Cities of Salt about the formation of Gulf oil states. His books are widely read because they are reflective of what happened to the societies that experienced the oil boom. The author stresses what he calls as the oil mentality, the change in attitudes among the people in the area and the development of

in Jordan, because the kind of topics he talks about affect the ordinary man in the street.

But Arab novelists are not the only ones that are read in this country. International authors of repute such as Gabriel García Márquez are widely known, read and respected. Taking into account that most of his writings are about Latin America, people are very much interested in the theme he tackles.

Besides that, there are those who read Colin Wilson, Iris Murdoch, the Japanese author Yukio Mishima and Milan Kundera. These are famous names. Although, they might be read by only a few in this country, it shows that intellectuals have adopted an international culture, one that provides a link with local tastes and traditions in Jordan.

Local writers also have an impact. Munis Al Razzaz writes about everyday events that relate to politics, economics and culture. However, his plots can be hard to follow. Al Razzaz is also a well-known local daily columnist in Jordan, but his books have a

mass consumerism. His books have proved so popular that some of them have been translated into English by David Thoreau, the famous American linguist and translator.

Another trend of this realist thought is provided by Mahfouz, an Egyptian who also writes from a socio-historical perspective. Unlike the panoramic view provided by Munif, Mahfouz talks about the mundane, everyday aspects of social life and their contradictions. With many translated works to his name, Mahfouz is widely appreciated

limited popular appeal. One local writer, Ramadan Al Rawashdi won the Egyptian Naguib Mahfouz Prize for Arabic literature in 1993 for a short story that was based on his personal social and political experiences in Amman. Although it explores a simple theme—a man from a rural area coming to terms with the city—it is full of feelings, pain and sorrow. ☐

MARWAN ASMAR IS THE MANAGING EDITOR OF THE AMMAN-BASED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER *The Star*.

PULP FICTION

Continued from page 1

The typical buyer here is not an usual book reader. He, or she, has an average education level. The favorite tides: self help, humor and spirituality. For those buying from the kiosks, *The Ninth and Tenth Revelations* by James Redfield are the favorites, together with Stephen King's horror stories, says Juan Forn, writer and former editor with Planeta.

John Grisham and Sydney Sheldon were the other icons, but their novels don't sell as well today as they did in the past. People prefer religious, mystic or even agnostic books, say most editors, writers and journalists.

A new wave

There is, however, a number of people who know about every new foreign title in the market, who await new releases with anxiety, who usually can't wait for the Spanish translation to be published and eventually manage to get the original version: the local intellectual elite. Among these people, the Italian Antonio Tabucchi is the top author right now, says Rodrigo Fresan, a writer and himself part of this elite.

Fresan adds that the list of "totem writers" for Argentine intellectuals and writers has been changing year after year. "There are waves, fashions," he says. Paul Auster was the hit of 1995, but, "Auster was a bluff. He was completely overvalued," complains Zeiger. Raymond Carver and Tomas Bernhard were the "must reads" in previous years. Richard Ford and Peter Handke used to be at the top of the wave, too.

But for these foreign writers, "success" means, at the very best, a few thousand copies. It is a far cry from the prosperity they enjoy in their homelands. ☐

GABRIEL PASQUINI IS A BUENOS AIRES-BASED JOURNALIST AND THE AUTHOR OF *White and shiny: Mafia and power in Argentina*.



The pride of the Argentine? US novelist Sidney Sheldon

popular in Europe as it was here. And the same carries over for books. Our popular literature is translated over there, but the reverse is not true."

Aside from the small number of works that are published and the limited number of languages that can easily be drawn from, the biggest obstacle to translations in the US is money. Publishing translations is not lucrative; perhaps the best a publisher can hope for is that they break even.

So why publish translations? Concludes Polizzotti, "Because it is more and more a global culture that we live in, and although certainly not everything that is produced is worthy of attention, for us to believe that we can ignore the cultural products of the rest of the world only serves to impoverish us all." ☐

SADI RANSON IS EDITOR OF LUMEN EDITIONS, A PUBLISHER LOCATED IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

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WP1



Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Réunion urgente de la Ligue arabe

Une réunion urgente des ministres des Affaires étrangères de la Ligue arabe se tiendra samedi en présence du président palestinien Yasser Arafat. Elle portera sur l'unique sujet des «dangers qui menacent le processus de paix au Proche-Orient», notamment la levée du gel sur la colonisation à Jérusalem», a précisé l'organisation. Yasser Arafat et les chefs des diplomatie arabes examineront dans ce cadre «le refus du gouvernement du Likoud de se conformer aux accords d'Oslo et de reprendre les négociations de paix avec la Syrie». Une réunion ordinaire des ministres des Affaires étrangères était déjà prévue au Caire le 14 septembre. Cette rencontre extraordinaire en présence d'Arafat devrait permettre l'élaboration d'une position arabe commune vis-à-vis des développements relatifs au processus de paix, conformément à une décision du sommet arabe du Caire en juin. Le sommet arabe du Caire présidé par Hosni Moubarak (notre photo) avait «chargé les ministres des Affaires étrangères de tenir une réunion pour évaluer les développements relatifs au processus de paix, et ce avant la prochaine session du conseil de la Ligue, prévue en septembre».



Négociations

Une poignée de questions

Si la première poignée de main entre MM.Arafat et Netanyahou a été interprétée comme un signe d'ouverture, les négociations entre Israéliens et Palestiniens ne progressent toujours pas.

«L'Orient

complicé». Cette célèbre formule du général de Gaulle est toujours d'actualité. Jusqu'au matin du mercredi 4 septembre, la rencontre entre MM.Arafat et Netanyahou était incertaine. Une semaine auparavant, une série de contacts et de réunions entre les conseillers du Premier ministre israélien et des responsables palestiniens avait connu des hauts et des bas. Les divergences sont nombreuses. Les Palestiniens les estimant à 33. Mais le point de friction le plus important résidait dans la volonté palestinienne d'une déclaration officielle du gouvernement israélien s'engageant à respecter des accords signés entre l'OLP et le gouvernement israélien.

Le gouvernement de M.Netanyahou tient en effet à rediscuter le redéploiement israélien de la ville d'Hébron prévu originellement pour le 28 mars dernier. Au terme de sa première rencontre avec M.Netanyahou, le président Yasser Arafat a déclaré que la réunion avait «ouvert la voie à une coopération avancée dans le domaine de l'éducation des accords». Et concernant les questions clés des négociations à venir, les deux leaders se sont contentés d'annoncer la création de commissions. Une façon diplomatique d'expliquer qu'aucun résultat tangible n'avait été enregistré.

Le résultat de la réunion de la commission mixte d'orientation et de contrôle militaire entre Saïbe, Erakat et l'Israélien Dan Shomron a confirmé ce manque de progrès. De même, le report de la réu-



Voilà une semaine, MM.Arafat et Netanyahou se serraient la main à Erez, à la frontière entre Israël et la bande de Gaza.

nion prévue entre le chef de l'OLP et le ministre israélien de la défense Yitzhak Mordechai, auteur d'un nouveau plan de retrait d'Hébron, va dans le même sens.

Une importante

pression internationale

Cependant, cette poignée de main entre MM.Arafat et Netanyahou a tout de même une grande importance politique. Elle incarne tout d'abord la reconnaissance de la part d'une droite israélienne dure de la réalité palestinienne et de son expression politique, l'OLP. Benjamin Netanyahou avait juré à maintes reprises ne jamais tendre la main au «chef terroriste Arafat».

Cette réunion a remis le train du processus de paix sur les rails des négociations directes à un haut niveau après trois mois d'intermittence.

Si le Premier ministre israélien a tendu la main à Yasser Arafat, ce n'est pas seulement parce que c'est un interlocuteur

palestinien inévitable. C'est surtout en raison de la pression internationale, notamment américaine et égyptienne, qui se faisait de plus en plus forte autour de cette rencontre. L'Egypte a en effet menacé d'annuler la conférence économique régionale prévue en octobre au Caire, à laquelle Israël doit participer. Si les Israéliens ne se retiraient pas d'Hébron. Mais dans l'immédiat, cinq grandes questions restent toujours sans réponse: le redéploiement d'Hébron, l'aéroport de Gaza, la libération des prisonniers palestiniens (environ 6000), la route de liaison entre la Cisjordanie et Gaza et la reprise des négociations sur le statut définitif des territoires.

Les deux parties affichent désormais un discours positif. Les réalités sur le terrain dans les jours à venir permettront de savoir si elles sont sincères.

De Gaza, Hassan Balawi

Education

Des étudiants désorientés

A chaque rentrée universitaire, le problème de l'orientation se pose. Beaucoup d'étudiants refusent de suivre des formations techniques une fois le bac en poche, préférant choisir un enseignement généraliste qui ne les prépare pas toujours pour le marché du travail.

Après douze ans

d'études scolaires, les élèves qui viennent d'obtenir le tawjihi, le baccalauréat jordanien, cueillent enfin le fruit de leurs longs efforts. Beaucoup se sont détendus lorsqu'ils ont vu leur nom sur la liste d'admission aux universités voilà deux semaines. Mais en même temps, de nombreux bacheliers ont connu une grande déception. En effet, il fallait avoir une moyenne supérieure à 76,5% de réussite aux différents examens du bac pour espérer rentrer cette année à l'université. Parmi les 41.000 élèves qui ont obtenu leur bac cette année, 9.200 ont été acceptés dans les universités publiques de Jordanie.

La moyenne théorique imposée par les universités pour y être admis est de 65%. Un chiffre qui varie chaque année en fonction du nombre de candidats et des disponibilités des universités. Dans les universités privées, les critères financiers sont ceux qui déterminent l'admission. «Normalement ceux qui ont eu entre 70,5% et 65% de réussite au bac doivent s'orienter vers l'enseignement professionnel», explique Walid el Maani, président de la commission chargée d'étudier les dossiers d'entrée aux universités jordanien.

«Malheureusement, beaucoup préfèrent en ce moment les universités privées qui offrent une formation académique théorique ne les destinant pas vers un avenir très clair». La Jordanie possède neuf universités privées et trois collèges universitaires spécialisés privés pouvant accepter 24.000 étudiants chaque année, selon Nazeq Kuteibat, responsable des universités privées au ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur.

Avec un pourcentage de chômage en Jordanie qui oscille autour de 15%, l'orientation des élèves qui viennent d'obtenir le bac se

pose comme une question essentielle. «En tenant clairement compte du fait qu'il y a annuellement environ 150.000 arrivants sur le marché du travail», explique Walid el Maani, «et que les opportunités de travail dans ce pays restent toujours limitées, le ministère de l'Education a imposé des orientations variées afin de répondre aux besoins du marché du travail». Il existe en effet une formation pratique qui débute à l'âge de 16 ans destinant les élèves dans les domaines de l'hôtellerie, du commerce, de l'industrie, du médical ou de l'agriculture.

Avéuglés par le prestige qui entoure les étudiants détenant un diplôme de maîtrise d'une université classique, la plupart cherchent à entrer dans les universités académiques pour suivre des études qui ne correspondent pas toujours à leur formation initiale. «Le problème est que l'on ne cherche pas le savoir pour le savoir lui-même mais on cherche un diplôme, sans réfléchir aux besoins que connaît ce pays», regrette Walid el Maani.

L'attrait du diplôme

«La pyramide de l'enseignement supérieur est inversée», estime Mohammad el Makousi, vice-président de l'Université de Jordanie. «On réfléchit actuellement à des projets ayant pour but d'élaborer de nouveaux programmes dans les universités qui pourront répondre aux attentes du marché travail. Ce plan de restructuration doit permettre de mieux coller aux besoins du pays. La filière du tourisme, par exemple, fait partie de ces projets nécessaires pour aider à valoriser les atouts de la Jordanie».

Un seul établissement fait figure de pionnier dans le domaine de l'enseignement technique supérieur. C'est le collège universitaire appliqué



Les universités publiques de Jordanie accueillent pour cette rentrée universitaire 9200 nouveaux étudiants.

des ingénieurs, qui se montre depuis longtemps très efficace dans sa formation de techniciens. Ce collège fondé en 1975 consacre 60% de son enseignement aux matières techniques.

Plusieurs filières sont proposées dans cet établissement. Une d'elle réservée aux jeunes étudiants accueillis environ 150 élèves. Elle est destinée à ceux qui ont arrêté leurs études scolaires à l'âge de seize ans et qui souhaitent suivre une formation pour devenir en deux ans des ouvriers qualifiés. Une autre filière forme elle en deux ans 700 techniciens chaque année de niveau bac.

Il existe aussi un enseignement appliqué qui est dispensé en coopération avec de grandes compagnies industrielles pour former des enseignants techniciens. Cet établissement possède plusieurs branches dans le pays, dont l'une à Tafiseh et l'autre à Husn, près d'Irbid. Il sera aussi le noyau principal de l'Université appliquée de Balaka, à Salt, qui vient d'être créée.

«Nous souhaitons fonder

une infrastructure technique en Jordanie qui puisse s'adapter aux techniques internationales afin d'améliorer le secteur de l'industrie en Jordanie», explique Abdel Latif Arabiat, membre du conseil d'administration de cette nouvelle université appliquée. «L'important est d'essayer de mettre fin à la tragédie des diplômés théoriques académiques qui ne répondent pas aux besoins du pays». Cette université se distingue des autres notamment par son conseil de consultation qui réunit des professeurs et des professionnels afin de créer un lien entre la demande et l'offre du marché.

La tradition en Jordanie veut que ceux qui obtiennent des résultats élevés au baccalauréat choisissent la faculté de médecine ou des études d'ingénieur afin de bénéficier de l'image de marque dont jouissent ces professions dans la société. «Il nous faut du temps pour faire accepter ce genre d'enseignement appliqué ou technique à une société fascinée par l'apparence et les titres», conclut Abdel Latif Arabiat.

Oroub el Abed

Humanitaire

L'UNRWA, refuge des Palestiniens depuis 45 ans

Voilà quelques semaines, le siège de l'UNRWA quittait Vienne pour s'installer à Gaza. Depuis maintenant 45 ans, cette organisation onusienne lutte pour aider les trois millions de réfugiés palestiniens qui ont dû quitter leur terre. Une organisation qui connaît aujourd'hui de graves difficultés financières pour poursuivre son action.

Un drapeau blanc flotte au vent, orné des célèbres lauriers et de la mappemonde des Nations-Unies. Pour quelques trois millions de réfugiés palestiniens, dont environ un 1,3 million en Jordanie, c'est le symbole que la communauté internationale est consciente de leur situation et n'a pas encore résolu leur problème.

Voilà 45 ans que l'UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) a été créée, à la suite de la guerre de 1948 qui a chassé les trois-quarts de la population palestinienne de leurs maisons. La résolution 194 des Nations-Unies, votée en décembre 1948, prévoyait le retour des réfugiés, ou une compensation pour ceux qui choisiraient de rester en dehors de la Palestine.

L'UNRWA fut créée pour donner une aide humanitaire à tous ces réfugiés qui attendent toujours une solution à leurs problèmes. Son mandat est renouvelé tous les trois ans par les Nations-Unies, le mandat actuel expirant en 1999. «Nous en sommes maintenant à la quatrième génération de réfugiés», explique Maher Saquer, responsable des relations publiques au quartier général de l'UNRWA à Amman. Officiellement, les réfugiés sont des personnes qui ont vécu entre 1946 et 1948 sur le territoire palestinien et qui se sont enfuis au moment de la guerre dans les pays arabes voisins.

De même, les réfugiés de 1948 chassés une deuxième fois en 1967 de Cisjordanie ou de Gaza gardent ce statut. Les titulaires de passeports jordaniens qui ont fui la Cisjordanie

en 1967 sont eux considérés comme des «personnes déplacées».

Il y a dix camps «officiels» en Jordanie. Après la guerre de 1948, quatre camps ont été créés à Al Wahdat, Jabbal Hussein, Zarka et Irbid. Six autres ont vu le jour après le conflit de 1967: Al-Talbiyya, Marka, Baqa, Jérash, Souf, Hosn. S'ajoutent à cette liste trois camps «non officiels»: Madaba, Jabbal Nasr et Sok'hneh. Les camps installés sur des terres gouvernementales administrées sont «officiels», tout regroupement de population sur des territoires privés ne correspondant pas à cette définition.

Au début, les camps étaient divisés en parcelles de 100 mètres carrés, chacune pourvue d'une tente et attribuée à une famille. «Ils ressemblaient à l'image qu'on se fait ordinairement d'un camp», explique Maher Saquer. «Mais aujourd'hui, ils ont été intégrés dans le tissu urbain. Les camps de Wahdat ou Jabbal Hussein, par exemple, sont devenus des quartiers d'Amman». À la fin des années 50, les abris de fortune ont été remplacés par des structures en dur, avec un toit en amiante.

Puis les réfugiés se sont eux-mêmes construits des maisons d'un étage, plus confortables. Avec l'évolution et le développement des camps, les activités de l'UNRWA se sont transformées. A l'origine, 80% du budget de l'agence étaient consacrés à l'aide humanitaire: nourriture, couvertures, aides médicales, fournitures scolaires... Les réfugiés dépendaient complètement de cette aide. A partir des années 60, l'accent a été mis sur



Pendant et après la guerre de 67, 400.000 Palestiniens ont passé le pont Allenby pour se réfugier à l'est du Jourdain.

l'éducation. Comme l'explique Maher Saquer, «le capital intellectuel est le meilleur investissement pour l'avenir». A l'heure actuelle, l'UNRWA administre en Jordanie environ 200 écoles. Les programmes scolaires suivent ceux du pays d'accueil. A cela s'ajoutent des études plus poussées, dans le domaine de la formation professionnelle. A Amman, deux centres assurent des cours dont le niveau correspond à celui des community colleges jordaniens.

Après quoi, grâce à l'aide de l'agence, les meilleurs étudiants peuvent s'inscrire dans les universités jordanien ou du Proche-Orient. Dans le domaine de la santé, l'UNRWA assure un suivi constant de la population réfugiée. Aux 24 centres médicaux ouverts par leurs soins à l'extérieur et à l'intérieur des camps, s'ajoutent des services d'hygiène et des programmes spéciaux d'aide aux handicapés. Parmi les programmes les

plus significatifs de l'UNRWA, les associations féminines sont remarquables. Au départ, on y enseignait des activités traditionnelles telles que la couture. Puis elles se sont développées, devenant de véritables «clubs de solidarité». «Leur rôle est important», explique Maher Saquer. «Elles permettent aux femmes de discuter de leurs problèmes et de les résoudre ensemble».

Cela recoupe l'objectif et la philosophie de l'UNRWA: passer de l'assistance à l'autosuffisance, encourager les gens à s'investir dans les activités économiques qui leur assurent des revenus. L'UNRWA finance l'investissement de base de nombreux petits projets, grâce à un système de bourses depuis 1982 et depuis 1992, un système de prêts. On passe ainsi de l'aide au partenariat.

Entre le provisoire

et le permanent

L'UNRWA voit cependant un gros point noir se profiler à l'horizon: le déficit budgétaire de l'agence qui se monte à environ 50 millions de dollars. Cette organisation est victime d'un statut particulier: elle ne dispose pas d'un budget des Nations Unies, comme d'autres agences, mais dépend de l'aide annuelle de pays donateurs. Ceux-ci se répartissent chaque année pour décider du montant de leurs contributions. «Ce système nous empêche de prévoir des programmes à long terme, car nous ne savons jamais combien d'argent il y aura dans les caisses l'année suivante», se lamente Maher Saquer. Le commissaire général de l'UNRWA, Peter Hansen, a demandé début septem-

bre à la Ligue arabe d'intervenir auprès de ses membres pour qu'ils contribuent à combler le déficit budgétaire, en indiquant que l'agence risquait de cesser ses activités. Il a demandé au secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe d'inscrire cette question à l'ordre du jour de la réunion des ministres arabes des affaires étrangères qui doit avoir lieu samedi au Caire. Le 23 septembre, une réunion aura lieu à Amman pour discuter des éventuelles solutions à cet épineux problème. Les conséquences des troubles politiques que connaît la région ne simplifient pas la situation. La guerre du Liban ou l'intifada ont coûté très cher à l'UNRWA. L'ensemble des problèmes des réfugiés peut se résumer dans un paradoxe: «Les réfugiés se plaignent toujours», plaisante Maher Saquer avec une lucidité malicieuse dans le regard. «Si nous améliorons les services, ils croient que nous ou-

blions leur statut de réfugiés et pensent que nous voulons les maintenir en permanence sur place au lieu de les voir rentrer en Palestine. Et si nous ne faisons rien, ils croient que nous les abandonnons». Les millions des camps qui ne dépassent jamais un étage sont le symbole même de ce compromis entre le provisoire et le permanent.

L'UNRWA continue de jouer un rôle essentiel, rappelant au monde entier combien elle a aidé de gens à sortir de situations désespérées. «Je suis un enfant des camps», raconte Maher Saquer. «Même si je n'ai plus besoin d'aide aujourd'hui, cela me fait toujours quelque chose de voir ce drapeau blanc flotter au vent. Je sens que la mission humanitaire continue et qu'en même temps, c'est le symbole que nous retrouverons peut-être un jour notre pays.»

Mona Qaddoumi

C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

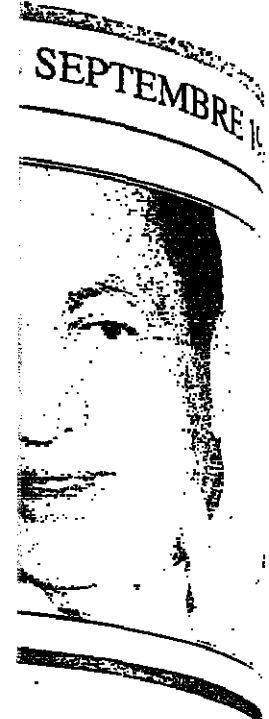
Vidéo

«Molière», un film écrit et mis en scène par Ariane Mnouchkine relatant la vie de cet auteur et acteur du 17ème siècle qui a lutté jusqu'à l'épuisement pour exercer son art, le théâtre. Au Centre culturel français à 20h00 le 17/09 (1ère partie) et le 18/09 (2ème partie).

Exposition

«Tapis volants». Une exposition réunissant au CCF des tapis réalisés par des artistes français ou originaires du Maghreb et du Moyen-Orient.

Le concert «Talents Lyriques» qui était prévu le 16 septembre à Jérash est annulé.



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THE STAR'S

COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Edited by Zeid Nasser

The fact and hype on viruses and the Internet: The possible need for "Cyber antibiotics"

By Jawad Abbassi
Special to The Star

COMPUTER VIRUSES display many traits of the living biological viruses that infect humans. For instance, they exist on an infected host and spread through interaction to infect others. Both types are also sickening: in the real sense of the word.

Computer viruses are essentially programs which reproduce their own code whenever a program is executed or a computer is booted from an infected disk. These programs interfere with any computer's proper functioning, by deleting files or causing system crashes.

Computer viruses came about in 1987 and have, since then, "bequeathed" the computer community with pains ranging from simple headaches to full-blown migraines. Computer virus programming has also created a \$152 million business—as estimated by PC data—as a result of the development and sales of Anti Virus software by companies like McAfee and Symantec. Anti virus programs track and detect viral codes and neutralize or destroy them.

A situation, therefore, has arisen where a ruthless digital

war has started between the young and bored computer wizards who program viruses, and the professional programmers who find these malicious lines of code and write anti virus programs to eradicate them.

Much hype proliferated about the dangers of being connected to the Internet or to

entitled "Good Times", which warns you against reading an email message at the risk of triggering a multitude of disastrous repercussions such as a deadly loop that would result in overheating and melting your computer's microprocessor. I don't believe it. It is a hoax.

Even downloading files from the Internet using FTP or simply Email Attachments is also neutral as long as these files are checked for viruses before they are executed. It is therefore, quite important not to execute files or open MS Word documents before they are comprehensively checked for viruses. Another soothing fact regarding virus spreading over the Internet is the fact that more than 90% of virus infections happen through booting from infected



You'll need lots of coffee and good virus-checkers to scan all the Internet files you download everyday

commercial Bulletin Board services (BBS) because of virus infection through email messages, newsgroups, and web browsing. This has been the result of so many false presumptions regarding how viruses work, or spread. Basically, viruses infect computers only when an infected program is executed on the computer or a computer is booted from an infected disk. Therefore, the regular and mundane Internet acts of receiving and sending email and faxes over the Internet or browsing the web are quite harmless. Viruses simply don't spread by reading email.

When you receive a message

While the use of the Internet's different utilities presents no extra risks for virus infections, the use of the Internet for exchanging computer programs between millions of users means more chances of virus spreading than the chances associated with the old methods of exchanging computer diskettes. The Internet, therefore, has—by facilitating the exchange of computer files (both infected and clean)—increased the chances of virus spreading. Some estimates go as far as stating that the Internet made it 10 times faster for viruses to spread. Of course,

Global One answers accusations, with hard facts: The 'comparative' facts about the Internet's expenses in Jordan

IN RESPONSE to the raging argument among users that the costs of Internet are high in Jordan, Global One / Sprint Jordan's management is countering users' claims by delivering concise information on the costs of Internet.

"The Internet service rates in Jordan are not the highest in the world said Mr Imad Ayoub, general manager of Global One / Sprint Jordan."

"In fact, so far, they are the lowest in the Middle East, with the exception of Israel," added Mr Ayoub. The approximate rates for a full Internet access

Country	One time Set up Charge	Monthly subscription & 8hrs usage
Jordan	non	\$45
Lebanon	\$35	\$51
UAE	\$83	\$63
Bahrain	\$19	\$48
Israel	non	\$25

and 8 hours of usage per month, in five countries in the region, is shown in the table above. With a yearly subscription with Global One / Sprint Jordan, the monthly cost, including 8 hours of usage, goes down to \$38.6—no other Arab country provides such

great value. "Global One / Sprint Jordan is proud to be a pioneer Internet service provider in Jordan and in the region," commented Mr. Ayoub. "Thanks go to the Jordanian Government and to the TCC for making this happen. We look forward to providing more and more valuable and quality services in Jordan," he added. "We also look forward to further reductions in cost by the TCC for the International lines so we can join the service providers in other countries in their service-plan costs," concluded Mr Ayoub.

A few weeks prior to Middle East-wide launch: Microsoft speaks on Arabic Office 95

MICROSOFT HAS announced the official release date of Microsoft Arabic Windows 95 and Microsoft Office 95 on 22 September, 1996, in the Middle East. A special launch event will be organized by Microsoft and Specialized Technical Services (STS) in Amman, on 7 October, 1996.

Arabic Office 95 is an important landmark in Arabic computing. Two versions of the fully 32-bit Microsoft Arabic Office will be supplied to the market, the standard operating version with the Microsoft Word word processor, Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and Microsoft PowerPoint presentation graphics program. The Professional version includes all programs in the Standard

package with the addition of the Microsoft Access relational database program. Both will also ship with the Microsoft Schedule+ Arabic edition time management program and Arabic Microsoft Windows 95 will be packaged with the popular Microsoft Internet Explorer browser.

Ahmed Chami, general manager of Microsoft Middle East said that while the market had expressed a keen interest in Arabic Windows 95, it was the advent of the Arabic Edition of Office 95 that was generating the major interest. "Arabic Office 95 is optimized for the 32-bit Arabic Windows 95 platform and despite the delay between the launch of the English and the Middle East local-

ized product, the Arabic edition of Office is right up to date, very powerful, very feature-rich and very productive on-line or off-line," said Chami.

Microsoft PowerPoint has been enabled for the first time in the new Arabic edition of Office, meeting demand from presenters in the Middle East who have been without an effective localized presentation graphics program. Localized Arabic versions of Excel and Access have been radically revised and they offer full bi-directional functionality. "We are particularly pleased to have got a fully enabled version of 32-bit PowerPoint out in this cycle and we are now fulfilling a long-standing promise to the market," said Mr Chami.

News update

The latest BBS in Jordan begins test-service

Computer Network Systems (CNS) has begun to offer the test-phase of its bulletin board service, called Primus.

Primus differs from other services in Jordan, like NETS and Access, in the fact that it offers more graphical features and utilizes Internet-based software. Using a BBS software called Wildcat, users actually browse through the service in true Internet-browser style—very much like Netscape Navigator—and enjoy the graphical powers that are on offer. For more information on Primus,

contact CNS at telephone 614755. The service 'officially' launches at METS '96 in November. It will definitely introduce something genuinely new to the BBS scene and on-line community in the country.

Figures on Saudi Arabia's computer market

According to statistical reports, some 85,000 computers were sold in Saudi Arabia during 1995, worth about \$110 million. The Arab market was estimated at 270,000 computers in 1995. Saudi Arabia accounted for 35% percent of that.

Graf beats Seles for 6th consecutive grand slam title

By Julie Cart
LA Times Washington Post news service

NEW YORK—Thunder rolled and lightning flashed. A deluge broke over Stadium Court, ushering out the women's singles final at the US Open Sunday.

With almost reckless timing, Steffi Graf waited until the first drops of rain fell before she finished off Monica Seles, 7-5, 6-4, to win her fifth Open title and her sixth consecutive Grand Slam championship.

The weather was a metaphor for Seles' day, which began under brilliant sunshine and finished under dark clouds. Seeded No. 2 to Graf's No. 1, Seles figured to give Graf at least as tough a time as she had in losing to the German in last year's final.

Helping Seles' cause was a nervous Graf, who said she feared she might play as unevenly as she had for most of the tournament. Graf rose to the

occasion, however, and played the best she has in two weeks. "To me, it is still a big question, too—how I am able to play that well when I need to," Graf said. "I guess I believe in myself."

Graf's latest US Open title gives her 21 Grand Slam singles titles, three behind Margaret Court's record.

Increasingly asked about the record, the 27-year-old Graf refused to discuss it. But others are.

Seles said there is no doubt about Graf's dominance of the women's game at the moment. "Steffi is clearly No. 1. Everybody can see that," said Seles, who claimed her 1996 Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in January. "She has won three Grand Slams. Anybody who does well at Grand Slams, in my mind, is the No. 1 player. This year, it clearly has been Steffi."

It was a New York kind of match, complete with strange goings on: Graf was offered another in a string of on-court marriage proposals, and play

was halted when a strong chorus of "Happy Birthday" wafted over from the adjoining Grandstand Court, where US Davis Cup captain Tom Gullikson was being serenaded.

If Graf and Seles were not already known for the speed at which they play, it might have seemed as if they were racing the deteriorating weather conditions.

The match was barely half over before the storm began to move in. Dark clouds that were a distant menace at the start of the match stalked the stadium as the afternoon wore on. By the latter stages of the second set, the court was in darkness and the remainder of the match had to be played under lights.

The match had been over for only a few minutes when a slanting rain began to pelt the court. Fans scurried for the exits and for refuge beneath the stadium, but for the players there was no shelter.

Despite the rain, officials stubbornly went ahead with the televised award ceremony. A parade of flags was marched in and the flags snapped and bent on their poles. Wind-driven debris and papers were swirling around the stadium. Graf and Seles giggled as they stood, drenched, and accepted their

soggy paychecks—\$600,000 for Graf and \$300,000 for Seles.

The match had little to offer tactically. Graf was able to break Seles in the third game of the first set by pressuring Seles' vulnerable serve and driving her back with penetrating groundstrokes. Seles was afraid to venture to the net, although she had suggested before the match that the way to play Graf is to be aggressive and control points.

Seles spends a good portion of her practice sessions working on a serve-and-volley style, so to not exploit that skill is to holster a powerful weapon. Afterward, she chastised herself for not coming to the net more often.

"Sooner or later, I better do it in a match or I am going to be 40 years old and still never try it. So I might as well have tried it," she said, shaking her head. "A few times I was successful and a few times I wasn't, but at least I had the guts to go in a few times today, which I didn't do before in my life."



There was no way Seles would have challenged Graf's serve or attempted to slide to net. Graf served brilliantly, in terms of power and placement. She faced only one break point and had 10 aces, nearly all coming at critical moments.

Twice in the match, Graf answered a double fault with an ace. With a first-serve percentage of 71 percent, Graf frequently got her first serve in at speeds of more than 100 miles an hour. Seles had no answer for it.

"The key was her serve," Seles said. "She just kept getting her first serve in. I had no chance of returning it."

Once again Graf showed her mettle under trying conditions. Usually her distress is physical—here, Graf said, she enjoyed two weeks free of back pain.

The most pressing issue for Graf is the trial of her father, which began in Germany last Thursday. Peter Graf is accused of hiding a reported \$13 million in his daughter's income. Graf herself has not been charged, although prosecutors say it's possible. She may, however, be called to testify.

"It was really difficult to play this tournament," she said. "Really, really difficult. Last year was extremely difficult. I don't think this year was any easier. I was really struggling during the tournament just to stay focused and to concentrate. That is why to be sitting here in this kind of position is incredible."

What's incredible is that Graf has been saying that—and winning—for the last two years.

Sampras wins one for Gullikson, tops chang at open

By Julie Cart
LA Times Washington Post News Service

NEW YORK—Pete Sampras has been on a rescue mission these last two weeks at the US Open. Since 1993, he has won at least two Grand Slam titles each year, and he needed to win here to salvage a season that had not lived up to his standards.

A determined Sampras is a formidable figure, so it was not surprising that he rescued his season Sunday by defeating Michael Chang, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7-3), to win his fourth US Open title and his eighth Grand Slam title.

He accomplished the feat on the birthday of his late coach, Tim Gullikson, under whose guidance Sampras blossomed from a gangly, fragile baseliner to a mentally tough and dynamic world No. 1.

Because of the standard Gullikson set for Sampras, the 25-year-old would not accept his season without a major title. But he had his doubts.

"I never thought I would be here as a winner," Sampras said. "It really saved my year. It wasn't a bad year. But this will definitely make the rest of the '96 season very enjoyable to play. My main goal since Jan. 1 (has been) to win a major title. It's a great way to end it."

"I have won a number of (Grand Slam titles) in the past four years, and the more I win, the more I want to win them. It's not the money, it's not the commercials, it's the titles. That's what I'll be remembered for."

"Today is Tim's birthday, he would be 45 today," Sampras said. "I was thinking about him all day. On the court I was thinking about things he told me. He's not with us, but he's here in spirit."

The start was delayed 2 1/2 hours because of rain.

Chang didn't start well, with Sampras breaking his serve in the second game of the first set. Sampras' serve was devastating, as usual. He had 13 aces, a number that surely would have been higher against anyone else. Even with Chang's ability to return serve, the second-seeded player had trouble handling Sampras' biggest weapon.

Chang didn't hold his serve until the sixth game of the first set, and he did it with two aces. A Sampras ace concluded the set.

Sampras broke again in the opening game of the second set and rolled through his service game at love. When Chang smacked a forehand winner on the first point of the third game he was rewarded with a smattering of applause from the crowd.

Chang salvaged something for himself by breaking Sampras in the sixth game. Chang held on the next game for his first lead in a set. But he was broken in the ninth game and Sampras served out the set.

Sampras dominated the tiebreaker, which was pivotal. Had Chang won the set, an already-tired Sampras might have reeled at the thought of a protracted Chang-style match. Chang is one of the few veteran tour players who continues to improve his game. He's never satisfied. He and brother Carl, who is his coach, constantly tinker with his game.

"In my life, it seems I've always been challenged to persevere," Chang said. "This is no exception. Today, things didn't go my way. I'm going to keep my head up and continue to work hard."

Chang had the opportunity to take over No. 1 had he won. A year ago, a scenario that had Chang as the No. 1 men's player would have been scoffed at. It's no longer a wild notion. Few players dedicate themselves to their profession as Chang does and few are as consistent. He is 22-3 on hardcourts since Wimbledon.

Carnival is over for resolute keegan Times of London

By David Maddock

NEWCASTLE UNITED'S tactics in Europe under Kevin Keegan have thus far been of the Light Brigade variety, a cavalry charge into the valley of death. Two seasons ago the valiant black and whites were spectacular and foolhardy in equal measure, going out after two rounds of the UEFA Cup, scoring 13 goals in the process.

Keegan, wiser now, admits it was an adventure then, an entertaining sideshow to the main event of establishing his club among England's elite. It was exhilarating, too, while it lasted, undone after taking a three-goal lead against Athletic Bilbao.

It is a very different Newcastle who will open their UEFA Cup campaign on Tuesday against Halmstadt, of Swe-

den. The English side has a depth of squad perhaps unmatched by any other team in the competition, and a weight of expectation to go with it. Keegan, burdened with the necessity of having to produce some tangible benefit for the 60 million-plus pounds he has spent on strengthening his team, knows that a different approach than that of two years ago is called for.

"It was like a carnival then. Against Bilbao, the crowd were doing Mexican waves and I think the players were joining in when we got to 3-0 up," he said. "But this time we have to do a professional job to ensure we get into the hat for the next round. Two years ago, winning the trophy wasn't really on the agenda. Now, it's got to preoccupy the players."

To do so, Newcastle must overcome

what appears the relatively routine challenge of the Swedish part-timers. It is not that simple, of course, as Keegan was eager to stress. "Their part-timers train harder than our professionals, and the club has a respectable record in Europe, as a 3-0 home win over Parma last season (in the Cup Winners' Cup) will testify," he said.

Much has been said about Newcastle's string of pearls across the forward line, but it may be the defense that holds the key to prolonged success in Europe. Keegan made a valid point when he drew on his winning experience with Liverpool in the 1970s.

"The formula for Europe is finding the correct balance between patience and adventure," he said. "At this club, we are never short of adventure or flair, but sometimes maybe the disci-

pline part, that patient resolve, is in question."

He might have added that it was the team's defensive discipline that was in question. Newcastle has at times displayed a remarkable ability to undermine themselves with negligent defending. Such abandon will prove yet more costly in Europe.

Keegan, though, feels there is one significant factor that could be harnessed to produce the expected outcome against Halmstadt. "This game is a wonderful chance for Les Ferdinand to prove that his partnership with Shearer can work against continental opposition," he said. "A lot has been said about the pairing not working for England, but I'm certain it can. They can prove it in Europe, and that will work for us."